



DICTIONARY SOCIETY  
OF NORTH AMERICA

Volume 33 ■ Number 2 ■ Fall 2009

# DSNA

NEWSLETTER

Article II, Section B3 of the Constitution of the Dictionary Society of North America states “Any member distinguished for the study, making or collecting of dictionaries may be elected by the membership as a Fellow of the DSNA, upon recommendation of the Executive Board.” At this year’s conference in Bloomington, the Society elected four new Fellows: Joan Hall, Luanne von Schneidemesser, Roger Steiner, and Victoria Neufeldt. The newsletter will run profiles of all four new Fellows over the next few issues. We start with Vicki Neufeldt, long-time editor of this Newsletter.

Victoria Neufeldt is probably best known to DSNA members as a charter member, a past president, and the editor of this *Newsletter* from 1997 until 2007. But Vicki’s career



Photo: Edward Finegan

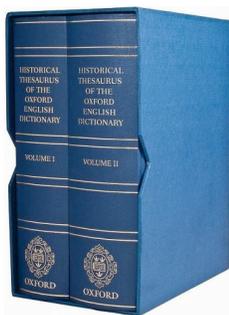
in lexicography has been wide-ranging, both professionally and geographically. Born and raised in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Vicki was educated at the Universities of Saskatchewan and Toronto, eventually earning two MAs (in German and linguistics) and a PhD in linguistics. After a brief stint in post-secondary education and a year as a reporter for the Saskatoon *Star-Phoenix*, Vicki came to lexicography in 1973 at Gage Publishing in Toronto, working on major revisions of the *Dictionary of Canadian English* series of school dictionaries. At Gage, she was the co-author and project editor for the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*, published in 1983. From Toronto, Vicki moved on to Cleveland, Ohio to become the Editor in Chief for Webster’s New World Dictionaries (then a subsidiary of Simon & Schuster). Her publications there included *WNW Dictionary of American English*, Third College Edition, 1988; and *WNW Children’s Dictionary*, 1991. After 6 years

in Cleveland, Vicki moved again, this time to Springfield, Massachusetts and the offices of Merriam-Webster. There, she was the senior editor in charge of school dictionaries from 1992–2000. Her crowning achievement there was the *Merriam-Webster’s Primary Dictionary*, which Vicki shepherded from original concept (in 1994) to published work (in 2005), doing much of the work after she had returned to her hometown of Saskatoon, where she has lived since 2000. Comprehensively “North American,” Vicki has contributed greatly to lexicography, and we heartily congratulate her on becoming a Fellow of the Dictionary Society of North America.

## News of Members

**Sandro Nielsen** announces the publication of *Lexicography in the 21st Century. In honour of Henning Bergenholtz*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2009, which he edited along with Sven Tarp.

Conference attendees who were fascinated by the presentation by **Christian Kay** and her colleagues in Bloomington will be glad to know that their book, 40 years in the making, is now available. The Historical Thesaurus of English project at Glasgow University presents the vocabulary of English from Old English to the present arranged in semantic categories, published in two volumes as the *Historical Thesaurus of the OED* by Oxford University Press on October 22, 2009. Further details (including a special introductory price) are available at [www.oup.com/online/ht/](http://www.oup.com/online/ht/).



**Charles Hodgson** has just published *History of Wine Words: An Intoxicating Dictionary of Etymology and Word Histories of Wine, Vine, and Grape from the Vineyard, Glass, and Bottle*. More information is available at his website, [www.wine-words.com](http://www.wine-words.com).

Oxford University Press has recently published a new edition of **Jesse Sheidlower's** *The F-Word*. In a similar vein, Jesse also wrote an article subtitled "Why it's so hard to put sex in the dictionary" for Slate.com in October. The article can be found at [www.slate.com/id/2227971/](http://www.slate.com/id/2227971/).

**Traci Nagle** has won the Percy Buchanan Prize for the best graduate student paper on South Asia from the Midwest Conference on Asian Affairs, the regional sub-association of the Association for Asian Studies. Her research, on the origins of "Hobson-Jobson," was partially funded by the DSNA-Urdang Award (as detailed in the previous edition of this newsletter), and she gave the original paper at the Bloomington conference this May.

## Industry News

191-year-old Scottish publisher Chambers Harrap will close its doors on December 31, 2009. Harrap titles will now be published by Larousse in Paris, and Chambers titles will be the responsibility of Hodder Education in London. A spokesperson for Hachette UK, the corporate owner of Chambers, blamed the "steep decline in sales of printed dictionaries and reference books" ([www.thebookseller.com](http://www.thebookseller.com), 10/28/09). Chambers published its first dictionary, *Chambers's Etymological Dictionary*, in 1867, and continued until this year, with *Chambers Concise Dictionary* appearing in March and *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* in August. As the print reference world grows smaller and smaller, we continue to lose venerable publishers. They will be missed.



The following books have been received at the DSNA office:

*Concise Oxford Spanish Dictionary, 4th edition / Diccionario Oxford Esencial*, OUP  
*Oxford Italian Mini Dictionary, 5th edition*, OUP  
*Oxford Spanish Desk Dictionary, 4th edition*, OUP  
 Baldick, Chris, *The Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, OUP

## William Safire (1929–2009)

by Ben Zimmer

William Safire, Pulitzer Prize-winning political columnist, presidential speechwriter, and self-described “language maven,” died on September 27, 2009 at the age of 79. His three decades as the author of the “On Language” column in the *New York Times Magazine* established him as America’s best known commentator on the English language.

Safire had been a member of the DSNA since 1983, and he was unabashed in his lexicophilia. “I like dictionaries,” he put it plainly in his introduction to the 2007 edition of *The New York Times Guide to Essential Knowledge*. “You may know my byline as that of a recovering vituperative right-wing scandalmonger. But I’m also a lifelong language maven lapping up lexicography (and apparently afflicted with alliteration).”

More than a decade before launching his “On Language” column in the *New York Times Magazine*, Safire made his first foray into political lexicography with *The New Language of Politics* (1968). Later retitled *Safire’s Political Dictionary*, the book went through three editions, with the last published by Oxford University Press in 2008, expanded to cover nearly 1,800 terms.

In the introduction to the third edition, Safire credited two main inspirations. The first was Eric Partridge, whose lone authorship of the *Dictionary of Slang and Unconventional English* (1961) convinced him that he too could undertake a one-man dictionary project, despite lacking a scholarly background. As Safire recalled in a 2008 interview I conducted with him for the Visual Thesaurus

website, “Samuel Johnson did one, Noah Webster did one, and Eric Partridge did one. Why can’t I try?”

The second inspirational force singled out by Safire was Fred Cassidy, founding editor of the *Dictionary of American Regional English*. Safire called *DARE* “the most exciting new linguistic project in the twentieth century,” and indeed he was a strong supporter of the dictionary throughout its history. In an early “On Language” column, in November 1979, he exulted in the way that the regionalisms of *DARE* illustrated “the color and excitement in our migrating, changing language.”

Safire gave much-needed exposure to *DARE*, and he also valued the contributions of other American lexicographers, with whom he would consult when researching the finer points of English usage and etymology. Though he often came under fire from linguistic scholars for oversights in his analysis, he readily deferred to experts who corrected him. He was, after all, merely a “maven,” with the Yiddish-derived self-effacement that the term implied. “When someone says ‘I am a maven,’” he explained in a 1985 column, “a note of self-mockery is added, as if to say ‘and if I’m not such an expert, sue me.’” For his humor, warmth, and intellectual openness, the maven will be sorely missed.



## Reinhard's References VI: Dissertations

by Reinhard Hartmann

Since my very last PhD student passed her examination last year, I have been thinking a lot about what makes people take on dictionary research, at which university they register, what subject they choose, how they investigate it, in what form they write it up, and what happens to the results.

The answer to the initial question depends on whether and how lexicographic topics are discussed in an educational context, which still varies enormously from language to language, country to country and place to place. There are very few academic institutions where it is possible to specialise on lexicographic research at higher degree level (Reinhard's References V in *Newsletter 33/1*, Spring 2009, listed twelve such centres from around the world).

In Section 12 of my ever-growing *International Directory of Lexicography Institutions*, I have been collecting empirical evidence on dissertations—alternatively called 'theses'—produced at various universities, but although there are already over 1,500 records, the list is still incomplete, as it is extremely difficult to get hold of such information, since universities only rarely offer such details on their websites, and there are very few databases offering search facilities (North American examples are the *National Library of Canada* and the *Online Computer Library Center* in the U.S.).

I acknowledge the help that several people have given me. If you have some relevant information, please send it to me at [r.r.k.hartmann@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:r.r.k.hartmann@exeter.ac.uk).

Country	University	M.A./ M.Phil. dissertations	Ph.D. theses
Brazil	U.E. São Paulo	14	16
China	Guangdong U.F.S.	72	8
Denmark	Aarhus B.S.	50(+)	8
France	U. Cergy-Pontoise	34	6
Germany	F.A.-U. Erlangen-Nürnberg	12	20
Great Britain	U. Exeter	43	22
Norway	U. Oslo	10	4
Poland	A.M.-U. Poznań	36	4
South Africa	U. Stellenbosch	30	17
Spain	U.P.F. Barcelona	9	14

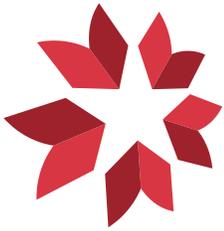
In the table I pick out just one university each from ten countries where such dissertations and theses have been produced at M.A./M.Phil. and Ph.D. levels (which partly overlaps with the dictionary research centres I listed last time). Among the problems I have observed over the years, I will just mention the following:

- The choice of a suitable topic is often arbitrary, perhaps triggered by a particular event (such as a conference), a particular project (such as the compilation of a national or local dictionary), or the presence of a pioneering staff member.
- The subjects covered tend to include several perspectives, from dictionary history to dictionary criticism, from dictionary structure to dictionary use, and from dictionary typology to dictionary IT.
- Not only is the documentation on local and national records limited, as I have pointed out, but potential publication of the research results in the form of conference papers and journal articles is sometimes open to chance. Only relatively rarely do researchers get an opportunity to have their dissertations and theses published in the form of monographs (in such book series as 'Lexicographica Series Maior').

More needs to be done to make people aware of such deficiencies, and ways of addressing them.

## American Council of Learned Societies

### Report of the DSNA delegate



The 2009 annual meeting of the American Council of Learned Societies was held in Philadelphia, May 7–9. As customary, the program included various reports, e.g., from the

National Humanities Alliance, the director of fellowship programs, the treasurer, the chair of the ACLS investment committee, and ACLS President Pauline Yu. Despite the difficult financial climate and with strong support from philanthropic organizations, ACLS was able to award more than \$10 million in fellowships (to around 250 applicants) during the 2008–2009 cycle.

One session featured three winners of 2008 ACLS awards discussing their research in the fields of anthropology, English literary history, and historiography. Topics of professional concern addressed by this year's panels were open access journals and peer review as the means of protecting academic freedom. The luncheon speaker was Don Randel, president of the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

The high point for language lovers, however, was the awarding of the 2009 Charles Homer Haskins Prize to William Labov of the University of Pennsylvania. In his superb "A Life of Learning" Haskins lecture, Labov brilliantly demonstrated the value of sociolinguistics by introducing the audience to the voices of six Americans from research projects across more than four decades whose speech had helped Labov and his students to understand and explain language variation and change. By

deftly combining sound clips of connected and analyzed speech, graphs, and multi-layered dynamic maps, Labov showed clearly how quantitative sociolinguistics is a humanistic undertaking, contributing to the understanding of human thought, experience, and creativity. The publication of Labov's Haskins lecture will be a challenge to the ACLS staff—Labov's lecture might occasion the first digital publication in the series.

DSNA members can find more information about the ACLS and its programs at [www.acls.org](http://www.acls.org). The address for the ACLS Humanities E-book project is [www.humanitiesEbook.org](http://www.humanitiesEbook.org). To learn about current legislation and key votes affecting the humanities community, go to [www.humanitiesadvocacy.org](http://www.humanitiesadvocacy.org).

Connie Eble



### DSNA Freelancer List

The DSNA Office is updating lists of freelancers and its list of folks willing to be contacted with questions from the general public, news media, and so forth. If you would like to be added to either list, please contact Lisa Berglund at [dsnadmin@gmail.com](mailto:dsnadmin@gmail.com)

## DSNA XVII: Bloomington, 2009

by Michael Adams

The XVIIth Biennial Meeting of the Dictionary Society of North America was held at Indiana University, Bloomington, 27–30 May 2009. I was honored to organize and host the meeting, with the invaluable support of the Conference Committee, which included Mary L. Clayton, Ilan Kernerman, Breon Mitchell, Traci C. Nagle, Kevin J. Rottet, and David E. Vancil. The conference was generously supported by the Indiana State University Foundation, Oxford University Press, Merriam-Webster, Elsevier, the Culbertson Fund of the Indiana University Department of English, K Dictionaries, Cambridge University Press, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, ThinkMap Visual Thesaurus, the American Dialect Society and Duke University Press, Wordnik, and Rulon-Miller Books. I am grateful to the committee and our sponsors for ensuring that we were able to hold a well organized, substantial meeting with all possible amenities at a reasonable cost to those attending.

The meeting was attended by 115 members of the Society from 16 countries, including Canada, England, Finland, France, Hong Kong, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, and the United States. The program included 36 papers by 42 authors/presenters, as well as a panel presentation about the *Historical Thesaurus of the OED* (published by Oxford University Press, October 2009) involving five speakers.

The papers covered a wide range of subjects, including pedagogy and language learning, Samuel Johnson's lexicography, the OED and related dictionaries, defining, national lexicography, language planning, the history of lexicography, slang lexicography, corpus lexicography, etymology, and issues of practical lexicography. A detailed schedule of papers and conference events can be found at [dsna-indiana2009.blogspot.com](http://dsna-indiana2009.blogspot.com).

In addition to the traditional papers, the Bloomington conference experimented with focused seminars by arranging a seminar

on learner's dictionaries, organized by Ilan Kernerman. The nine seminar participants circulated fully developed papers in advance of the conference and discussed them during a two-hour session held parallel to one of the general sessions. The latest

issue of the *Kernerman Dictionary News* (Number 17/July 2009) announces that K Dictionaries will publish papers originating in the seminar, as well as two others from the general conference program, in *DSNA Seminar on Learner's Dictionaries*, edited by Ilan J. Kernerman and



Conference organizer Michael Adams and his second-in-command, Traci Nagle.

Paul Bogaards, in December 2009 — lexicographers world-wide will have access to the seminar proceedings. Organizers of the Bloomington meeting hope that future DSNA conferences will include similar seminars on various topics, with similar results.

Of course, even the most dogged conferees have to relax and celebrate their short time together. To that end, there were numerous social events in Bloomington, including receptions to open and close the conference. We were also fortunate to have an exhibit of dictionaries from around the world and related materials devised more or less solely for our benefit (it was available to the public for two weeks after the conference) at the Lilly Library. The exhibit was curated by the Lilly's director, Breon Mitchell, who introduced it briefly and hosted the accompanying, convivial reception.

The Indiana State University Foundation and David Vancil invited the conference to a sumptuous reception and banquet in the Cunningham Memorial Library on ISU's Terre Haute campus. The event celebrated the Cordell Collection (members of the Cordell family were present and made a special gift to the Collection to mark the occasion) and the historical relationship between Indiana State University and DSNA: the first DSNA conference was held at ISU in 1975, organized by Professor Edward Gates, who subsequently served the Society as Executive Secretary (1983–1989) and President (1997–1999), and who was elected a Fellow of the Society in 1989. The Bloomington meeting is the first he has not attended since the Society began, and he was much missed. But we look forward to seeing him at the McGill University meeting in 2011. At the banquet, we were privileged to hear Terry Pratt's humorous, touching presidential address, as well as a musical program by the CatchWords (Terry Pratt, Lisa Berglund, Orin Hargraves, Peter Gilliver, and Orion Montoya), who specialize in appropriating familiar songs to lexicographical purposes.

Official conference photographs are available to all who attended, and several prints remain unclaimed. Anyone who paid the registration fee, did not receive a photograph, but would like one, please claim it by writing to me at [adamsm@indiana.edu](mailto:adamsm@indiana.edu).



*Terry Pratt gives his Presidential Address.*

## Cordell Corner

by David Vancil

I want to thank everyone who attended the seventeenth Dictionary Society of North America biennial meeting held at Indiana University and took the bus ride to Terre Haute for the reception, tours of the Cordell Collection, and the banquet. Thanks to our library dean, Alberta Comer, and the University Foundation, particularly Steve Brown, for underwriting the events here at Indiana State University.

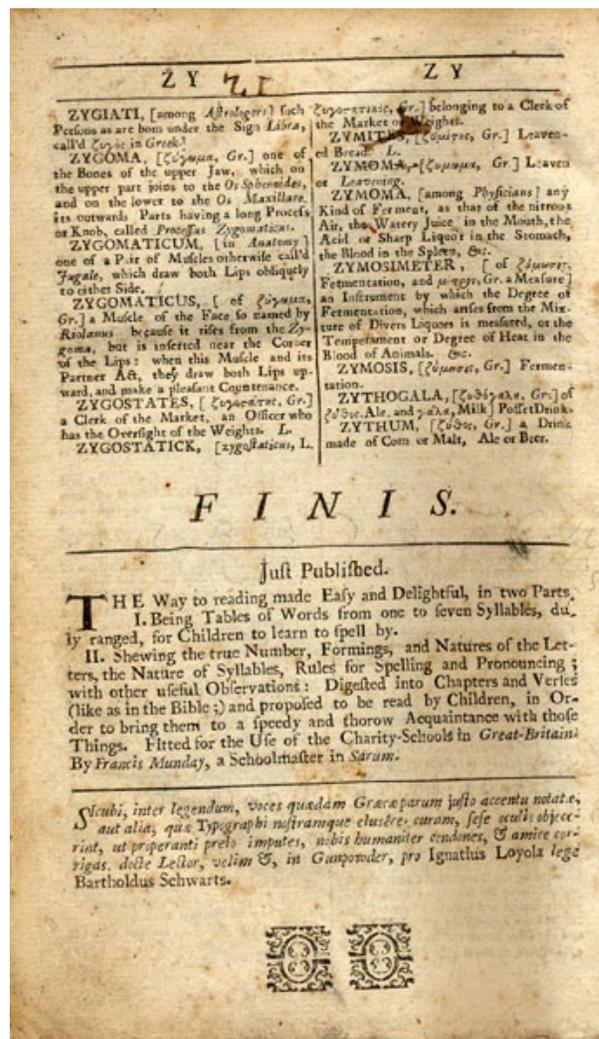
I am particularly glad that the Special Collections Department, in association with the Indiana State University Foundation, had the chance to show off the Cordell Collection as well as the new library events center. More than 120 individuals attended the events on May 29<sup>th</sup>.

You all made it a great conference and a great evening. Hats off to you, the members, and our host, Michael Adams, and his wonderful crew who made our stay in Bloomington both comfortable and invigorating. And as usual, the papers were both informative and lively.

Among the attendees for our gala evening in Terre Haute were Jeanne Cordell Shafer and Barbara Cordell, the daughters of Warren and Suzanne Cordell, accompanied by their spouses. On behalf of the family, including Cordell sons Robert and Warren, Barbara and Jeanne donated Joseph Baretto's two-volume 1771 edition of *A Dictionary of the English and Italian Languages*, with a dedication penned anonymously by Samuel Johnson. In addition, Barbara donated *NetLingo*, a dictionary devoted to unraveling the mysteries of the Internet.

If you visit the Special Collections Department in the not too distant future, you may find it changed. Planning is underway to expand the department in order to accommodate increases in staffing and digitization equipment designed to scan books. In addition, we hope to create a room that will accommodate as many as 50 guests and individual work spaces for visiting scholars. I am responsible for submitting an initial plan.

Back in 1986, one of my first assignments was to supervise a renovation project which more than doubled the capacity of the department. I did not think we would need additional space nor that I would be involved in another planned renovation of the department, but Special Collections has experienced almost exponential growth, including the addition of well over 1,300 Cordell Collection items. We are particularly interested in growing our lexicographical



Nathan Bailey 1771 (1st ed.) *An Universal Etymological English Dictionary*, final page, state A?

holdings, so the additional space may be arriving in the nick of time.

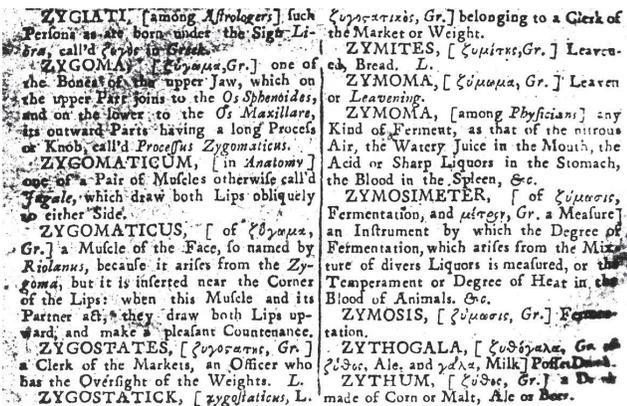
Rod McConchie returned with me from the meeting in Bloomington and spent a week doing research in the Cordell Collection as a research fellow. Rod has the singular distinction of having had the most fellowships (three), although Linda Mitchell has been here to do research as many times as Rod. As always, this indefatigable Australian from Helsinki accomplished a great deal in the time he was here. Some of you indicated during the tour and the next day that you would like to do research in the collection. The instructions for applying for a

research fellowship are on the Special Collections Department website. I hope you find the process easy and straightforward. Additionally, we are always willing to help in whatever way we can, so don't be reluctant to e-mail or call us for assistance.

I am pleased to say we have another Cordell research fellow scheduled to work in the Cordell Collection in October. A doctoral student in English at the University of Toronto, this researcher will be conducting an in-depth study of our Nathan Bailey holdings. The Cordell Collection, I believe, has the most complete holdings of Nathan Bailey materials in any location. Until recently, I was fairly certain that we had an example of every English-language imprint, but Madeline Kripke, DSNA member, bookseller and dictionary collector, shared an image from a variant issue of the first Nathan Bailey dictionary, the 1721 *An Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*. What is different about her dictionary is the final page, which bears a different text and colophon at the conclusion of the defined vocabulary. Madeline has graciously offered to share her findings with our visiting researcher. And, of course, the Cordell Collection is anxious to acquire an example of this extremely rare issue.

While we are speaking of acquisitions, I want to thank Alberta Comer, our dean, for her generosity in providing funds for the continued growth of the collection. In 2008/2009 (FY 2009), we added 43 titles to the pre-1901 holdings of the collection. The rate of growth has decreased as the cost of lexicographical materials has skyrocketed, although the budget has increased. A few of these items were donated. We have been able in the past to trade donated books that we already own for other works or credits, but such donations have dropped off. We encourage donations. Although the Cordell Collection is the largest of its kind, it still lacks many important works. Your donations, even of titles we may already own, make a difference.

...continued on next page



F I N I S.

IN Correcting some Typographical Errors, which considering the Variety of Character and Matter, together with the Urgency of the Press, are not I hope inexcusable. in Paragraph Gunpowder, for Ignatius Loyola a Monk, read Bartholus Schwartz a German.

Scabi, inter legendum, voces quaedam Graeca parum justo accentu notatae, sicut alia, quae Typographi nostramque eludere curam, sese oculis objecerint, ut proferanti prelo imputes, nobis humaniter condones, & amice corrigas, Dilecti Lector velim.



Nathan Bailey 1721 (1st ed.) An Universal Etymological English Dictionary, final page, state B?

## Cordell Corner, *continued*

You can find out what we have added in any given period in the online version of the Cordell Collection Pre-1901 database. Just type in the keyword "new2009," and you'll retrieve a listing of everything purchased during the last fiscal year. Such listings can be created going back to 1993. We are already off to a good start for the current fiscal year with the addition as of September of more than six titles.

The post-1900 materials continue to grow as well. While we occasionally purchase historically oriented materials for this segment of the Cordell Collection, we rely primarily on donations to increase its size. In fact, we are continuing to process the University of Illinois Center for Advanced Study gift of books that belonged to Ladislav Zgusta. On a personal note, I was thrilled to find a copy of my own book *Incunable Dictionaries* which I had given to Dr. Zgusta as a gift. After receiving it, Ladislav wrote a rather critical thank-you note, suggesting I might have done better work if I had transcribed the titles I cited from the originals! Yet, for all its shortcomings, I discovered that he had used it, as it was full of annotations and sticky notes. As you can imagine, many of the other books in Ladislav's library reveal the insights into the mind of this brilliant man.

The department has been fortunate to receive additional student-assistant funding in recognition of its important mission. Much of what we will do with our additional student assistants is digitize materials in various collections. Therefore, I invite individuals who have a particular Cordell title they would like to be digitized to contact me with their recommendation. We have already digitized titles based on requests by you, the researchers. We would be glad to do so again, depending on the usual factors that govern scanning. Unfortunately, we are not currently equipped to scan thick books.

Our cataloger, Jamie Davis, whom many of you met during the tour is no longer with us. She did a terrific job. All Cordell Collections books through the seventeenth

century have been cataloged, and all English language books through the eighteenth century have been cataloged. You can look at records for these in the online public access catalog, LUIS. Use the Internet and the following URL: [luis.indstate.edu/vwebv/searchAdvanced](http://luis.indstate.edu/vwebv/searchAdvanced). If you include "Cordell Collection of Dictionaries" as a phrase and combine this with the last name of a lexicographer, such as "Calepino" or "Webster" in the appropriate field, you'll get only items housed in or referring to the Cordell Collection. Experiment with this module, and I think you'll find it very useful. And, of course, the complete holdings are available in short-title databases found on the Cordell Collection home page at [library.indstate.edu/about/units/rbsc/cordell/cordell-idx.html](http://library.indstate.edu/about/units/rbsc/cordell/cordell-idx.html).

Finally, I welcome hearing of any opportunities for research partnerships with individuals or institutions. As curator of the Cordell Collection, I would consider it the capstone to my career to be involved in identifying new undertakings for these grand old books.

---

## **Lexikos is seeking more international subscribers.**

*Lexikos*, the journal of the African Association for Lexicography, is looking for international subscribers. For more information, see their website: [afrilex.africanlanguages.com/lexikos.htm](http://afrilex.africanlanguages.com/lexikos.htm), or write to [wat@sun.ac.za](mailto:wat@sun.ac.za).

The editor of *Lexikos* would also welcome submissions for publication from members of the DSNA.

## Conference entertainment: “When you use a dictionary”

When you use a dictionary  
 Be judicious and be wary:  
 Lexicography, I warn you,  
 Is a complicated trade,  
 And the product is like sausage  
 So don't ask me how it's made!  
     Don't trust Johnson, don't trust Webster,  
     Don't trust Murray's OED.  
     Every book has an agenda  
     Even when they all agree!

It is not as one supposes  
 (Nothing like what one supposes)—  
 They were not engraved by Moses  
 (No one half as wise as Moses).  
     Read the headwords, check your spelling,  
     Skim the etymology—  
     Lexicons have tales worth telling  
     Sorted out from A to Z!

When you use a dictionary  
 Be judicious and be wary:  
 If the word you want is missing  
 Go ahead—complain and pout.  
 Other readers are insisting  
 That the editors take it out!  
     Don't trust Johnson, don't trust Webster,  
     Don't trust Murray's OED.  
     Every book has an agenda  
     Even when they all agree!

It is not as one supposes  
 (It is not a bed of roses)—  
 They were not engraved by Moses  
 (No one half as wise as Moses).  
     Read the headwords, check your spelling,  
     Skim the etymology—  
     Lexicons have tales worth telling  
     Sorted out from A to Z!

When you use a dictionary  
 Be judicious and be wary:  
 Don't stop at signification  
 For you haven't done your jobs  
 Till you know the derivation,  
 And if it's dial., vulg. or obs.!

    Don't trust Johnson, don't trust Webster, &c.

It is not as one supposes  
 (It is not a bed of roses)—  
 They were not engraved by Moses  
 (As perusal soon discloses).  
     Read the headwords, check your spelling,  
     Learn the codes that here ensconce words.  
     Lexicons have tales worth telling—  
     Catachresis, nouns and nonce words!

Hail to lexicography! Sorting out from A to Z!  
 Hail to lexicography! Sorting out from A to Z!

(To the tune of “Never mind the why and wherefore”  
 from Gilbert & Sullivan's *HMS Pinafore*. Lyrics by Lisa  
 Berglund.)



Photo: Connie Eble

Peter Gilliver, Orion Montoya, Lisa Berglund, Terry Pratt, and Orin Hargraves.

**DSNA Newsletter**

*Return Address (for Post Office use only):*

Lisa Berglund  
Executive Secretary, DSNA  
Buffalo State College, KH 326  
Buffalo, NY 14222

---

**Publishing Information**

The *DSNA Newsletter* is published twice a year, in the Spring and Fall. The editor is Katherine Isaacs. News of members and other items of interest to our readers are welcome. Please send *Newsletter* correspondence, such as items for publication, etc., to the editor at <editor.dsnan@gmail.com>.

**DSNA Web Site**

[www.dictionariesociety.com](http://www.dictionariesociety.com)

Members with web sites of lexicographical interest who would like to be linked from our website can send URLs to the DSNA office at <dsnaadmin@gmail.com>.

**ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES (U.S. \$)**

	U.S., Canada, & Mexico	Other countries
Regular, joint, institutions:	\$40	\$50
Student or retired:	\$30	\$40

Send **correspondence re membership**, etc. to  
Lisa Berglund, Executive Secretary, DSNA  
Buffalo State College, KH 326  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
Tel: 716-878-4049 Fax: 716-878-5700  
Email: <dsnaadmin@gmail.com>

This issue: Vol. 33 No. 2 (Fall 2009)  
Cumulative issue #70