

NAAHoLS NEWSLETTER

The North American Association for the History of the Language Sciences

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The 2020 NAAHoLS annual meeting will again be held in conjunction with the Linguistic Society of America, the American Dialect Society, the American Name Society, the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas, the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics, and the Society for Computation in Linguistics. Featured LSA plenary speakers this year include Jessie Little Doe Baird (Wôpanâak Language Reclamation Project), Shelome Gooden (U of Pittsburgh), and Brian D. Joseph (The Ohio State University).

The conference will take place in New Orleans from 2-5 January 2020. Further details about our annual meeting are provided in this edition of the newsletter. We are excited about this year's schedule of presentations, and we hope to see you in Louisiana!

This year's NAAHoLS program will take place at the Hilton Riverside, all day on Friday (3 January), and all day on Saturday (4 January).

The annual NAAHoLS Business Meeting will be held at 3:00 pm on Saturday (4 January). If there are any items you wish to place on the meeting agenda, please let us know in advance.

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Linguistic Society of America: 94th Annual Meeting

New Orleans, Louisiana (2-5 January 2020)

The 2020 NAAHoLS meeting will again be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting of the Linguistic Society of America, and the American Dialect Society, the American Name Society, the North American Research Network in Historical Sociolinguistics, the Society for Computation in Linguistics, the Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas, and the Society for Pidgin and Creole Linguistics.

The 94th annual LSA meeting will take place in New Orleans from 2-5 January 2020. As in recent years, we are anticipating an interesting and engaging two-day schedule of NAAHoLS presentations, and we hope to see you in Louisiana!

The upcoming NAAHoLS program is scheduled to take place at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, on Friday (3 January) and on Saturday (4 January), in the Pelican Room. The annual NAAHoLS Business Meeting will be held in the late afternoon on Saturday.

Hotel Accommodations

The Hilton New Orleans Riverside (2 Poydras Street; 800-445-8667) has reserved a block of rooms for those attending the 2020 LSA Annual Meeting.

Hotel reservations are now available on-line and by telephone:

The LSA room rates for the 2020 Annual Meeting are (through December 11th):
Single/Double: \$139/night (Triple: \$169/night, Quad: \$199/night)

Advance Registration

Everyone attending the meeting is expected to register. Compliance is important for keeping LSA fees affordable. Only those who register will be allowed to present papers, use the Job Placement Service, or attend plenary presentations. **LSA members planning on attending the annual meeting may preregister on-line. (Note that dues-paying NAAHoLS members may preregister at LSA rates.)**

Preregistration fees for the 2020 Annual Meeting are (through December 13th):
Regular LSA Members (or dues-paying NAAHoLS members): \$265.00
Student LSA Members (or dues-paying NAAHoLS members): \$86.00
Non-Member (Individual): \$385.00
Non-Member (Student): \$165.00
On-site fees will be higher.

NAAHoLS Program (New Orleans, 2020)

Friday, 3 January Morning

Language and National Identity

Room: Pelican

Chair: Catherine Fountain (Appalachian State University)

8:55 Welcome and Introductory Remarks

9:00 *Bryan Fleming (Boston College)*: Exploring language and nationalism through primers

9:30 *David Boe (Northern Michigan University)*: Mencken and the emergence of “American” English

10:00 Break

Linguists and their Activities

10:15 *Seung Hwan Kim (Boston College)*: Forgotten and unforgotten mathematicians behind linguistics: Emil Leon Post and Richard Montague

10:45 *Raul Aranovich (University of California, Davis)*: Coincidences between Saussure and von der Gabelentz around the grammar of Chinese

Friday, 3 January Afternoon

Linguistic Backgrounds and Origins

Room: Pelican

Chair: Hope C. Dawson (The Ohio State University)

2:00 *Angelo Costanzo (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania)*: “Coniugationes uerborum quot sunt?”: The history of verb classes in descriptions of Latin and Romance

2:30 *Marc Pierce (University of Texas at Austin)*: Lehmann’s *Reader*, 1967-2020

3:00 *Joseph L. Subbiondo (California Institute for Human Science)*: The evolution of consciousness and its impact on historical linguistics and the history of linguistics: A study of A.H. Sayce’s *Introduction to the Science of Language* (1880)

**Saturday, 4 January
Morning**

Native American Languages and Linguistics

Room: Pelican

Chair: Joseph L. Subbiondo (California Institute for Human Science)

9:00 *Elwira Dexter-Sobkowiak (University of Warsaw):* Numeral system descriptions in the 18th century missionary grammars of indigenous languages of Mesoamerica

9:30 *Catherine Fountain (Appalachian State University):* From *verbos compuestos* to *nuclear clauses*: Terminology and description of incorporation in Nahuatl, 1547-2003

10:00 Break

10:15 *Marcin Kilarski (Adam Mickiewicz University):* Women in Native American linguistics (1830-1950)

10:45 *Margaret Thomas (Boston College):* William Wood's *New England's Prospect* and language learning in colonial New England

**Saturday, 4 January
Afternoon**

Linguistics and Public Life

Room: Pelican

Chair: Marcin Kilarski (Adam Mickiewicz University)

2:00 *Richard D. Janda (Indiana University Bloomington):* "Rules... on Land & Water... for... land & naval Forces": On the upper- & lower-case theory of morphosyntax assumed by the (hand)writers of the U.S. Constitution (1787)

2:30 *Hope C. Dawson (The Ohio State University):* Family reunions: The meetings of the Linguistic Society of America and other scholarly societies

NAAHoLS Business Meeting

Room: Pelican

Time: 3:00 – 4:00 PM

NAAHoLS Abstracts (New Orleans, 2020)

Raul Aranovich (University of California, Davis)

Coincidences between Saussure and von der Gabelentz around the grammar of Chinese

There are broad parallelisms between some of the ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure and Georg von der Gabelentz (Mensch 1966). Saussure's dichotomies between langue and parole, and between synchrony and diachrony, are foreshadowed in von der Gabelentz's *Die Sprachwissenschaft* (1891). I will show that further similarities in thought can be found around their discussion of the grammar of Chinese. Even though there is no proof of a direct influence of von der Gabelentz's work on Saussure, these further similarities weaken the claim of a coincidental relationship between the two linguists.

David Boe (Northern Michigan University)

Mencken and the emergence of "American" English

This past year represents the 100th anniversary of the publication of *The American Language* (1919), by the Baltimore-based journalist and polymath H. L. Mencken (1880-1956). The initial work sold well, and broadly reflected a "divergence" perspective (i.e., British "English" and "American" had been gradually moving apart, and could eventually evolve into separate languages), while later revisions adopted more of a "convergence with differences" orientation. This presentation will revisit Mencken's linguistic historiography in documenting the emergence of English in North America, along with the role of American independence on attitudes about this variety, arising from both sides of the Atlantic.

Angelo Costanzo (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania)

"Coniugationes uerborum quot sunt?": The history of verb classes in descriptions of Latin and Romance

This paper examines the history of linguistic descriptions of verbal classes, with specific attention to the impact of traditional descriptions of Latin on descriptions of the Romance languages. While they are "not generally considered an optimal design feature of language, because they impose on the language user the needless burden of arbitrary morphological variation that must simply be memorized" (Baerman 2016: 794), Latin and Romance have quite complex verbal inflectional classes. However, this complication is often minimized by the way these languages have been traditionally described, and consequently, our understanding of how classes actually work in these languages is limited.

Hope C. Dawson (The Ohio State University)

Family reunions: The meetings of the Linguistic Society of America and other scholarly societies

Relationships with other academic societies have been important to the LSA and its members since its 1924 founding. The early practice of holding joint meetings with the MLA or APA reflected this, but by 1939 the LSA was meeting independently. Subsequent growth of Linguistics and the LSA provided new opportunities, however, and "sister societies" began meeting with the LSA in 1978. Such relationships allow linguists to meet together and can alleviate "Balkanization" into specific areas of study. This presentation traces the history of the LSA's meetings with other societies, focusing on insights provided into the development of Linguistics in the US.

Elwira Dexter-Sobkowiak (University of Warsaw)

Numeral system descriptions in the 18th century missionary grammars of indigenous languages of Mesoamerica

One of the distinctive features of Mesoamerican languages is the use of the vigesimal numeral system. Since missionary grammars followed the model of linguistic analysis based on Latin, the descriptions of the native numeral systems rarely acknowledged the full complexity of the vigesimal counting. In this paper, I

analyze and compare the descriptions of cardinal numbers from six 18th-century colonial grammars of different indigenous languages of Mesoamerica: Nahuatl, Huastec, Otomí, Totonac, Tepehuán, and Kakchiquel. I also examine Spanish influence on the native counting systems, including loanwords or evidence of decimalization of the traditional Mesoamerican counting systems.

Bryan Fleming (Boston College)

Exploring language and nationalism through primers

How important is language in the construct of national identity? Discussions of nationality often include language as an important component, and we often find governments getting involved in linguistic matters. The decisions these actors make—and the language-related documents they create—give us a particularly powerful insight into the importance of language to a given regime’s nationalistic projects. Through the analysis of primers and other elementary-level language-teaching books dating from the early-20th century to the present day, I will explore the role these texts played in shaping and reinforcing a particular national identity.

Catherine Fountain (Appalachian State University)

From verbos compuestos to nuclear clauses: Terminology and description of incorporation in Nahuatl, 1547-2003

This study examines the ways in which noun incorporation in Nahuatl is presented in fifteen descriptive grammars spanning four centuries. This survey provides evidence of a high level of awareness of the phenomenon and the need to adequately describe it beginning with the very first extant descriptions of the language, and traces how the specific terminology used to describe noun incorporation evolved over several hundred years. Examination of the way in which incorporation has been discussed and exemplified also provides insights into how individual authors conceived of language more broadly, and how this reflects or contrasts with prevailing philosophies of language at the time.

Richard D. Janda (Indiana University Bloomington)

“Rules... on Land & Water... for... land & naval Forces”: *On the upper- & lower-case theory of morphosyntax assumed by the (hand)writers of the U.S. Constitution (1787)*

German-like, capitalized nouns dominate the handwritten U.S. Constitution, though adjectives in high-profile technical terms are also capitalized. Some nouns are uncapitalized by oversight or to avoid inter-line interference, but nouns used as prenominal modifiers functionally parallel to adjectives systematically appear lower-case: e.g., land and naval Forces. This morphosyntactic upper-/lower-case theory indicates a noun’s prototypical, fully-nominal use via capitalization; a noun’s non-prototypical, adjective-like use, via non-capitalization. Such an approach clearly rejects the alternative view that, e.g., *inspection Laws*, at the highest level, is a single noun that happens to be a compound (since such an analysis would require doubly-capitalized **Inspection Laws*).

Marcin Kilarski (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Women in Native American linguistics (1830-1950)

In this talk, I discuss the results of an ongoing project on the role of women linguists in the study of Native American languages in the period between c.1830 and c.1950. I focus on the contribution of Therese Albertine Luise von Jakob Robinson (1797–1870), Laura Sheldon Wright (1809–1886), Erminnie Adele Smith (1836–1886), and Ella Cara Deloria (1889–1971). Their life and work are compared in the context of the different backgrounds and motivations as well as the wider context concerning the developments in the study of Native American languages and the history of language study in America.

Seung Hwan Kim (Boston College)

Forgotten and unforgotten mathematicians behind linguistics: Emil Leon Post and Richard Montague

Why are some scholars remembered and others forgotten? Richard Montague is a well-known mathematician in linguistics for having introduced rigorous mathematical formalisms to semantics, which was previously thought to reject such devices. Emil Post, on the other hand, provided the string-writing system, and some fundamental conclusions about the computability of Chomsky’s (1957) early transformational generative grammar, with little acknowledgement from linguists except Pullum (2007; 2009; 2011; 2019). In this paper, I explore this question not only in terms of the merit of their works, but also addressing their intellectual milieus, the circumstances of their lives, their social connections, among others.

Marc Pierce (University of Texas at Austin)

Lehmann’s Reader, 1967-2020

Winfred Lehmann’s *A Reader in Nineteenth-Century Historical Indo-European Linguistics* (1967) contains excerpts from 18 important works in English translation. Contemporary responses to the *Reader* were mixed; it was praised for making the texts available in English translation, but criticized for the choice of texts and the quality of the translations. Today, though, the *Reader*’s genuine value is recognized. I argue that this shift in attitudes towards the *Reader* occurred for two main reasons. First, it gives non-specialists access to these important texts. Second, it provides a handy gateway to the history of the field.

Joseph L. Subbiondo (California Institute for Human Science)

The evolution of consciousness and its impact on historical linguistics and the history of linguistics: A study of A.H. Sayce’s Introduction to the Science of Language (1880)

Archibald Henry Sayce’s (1845-1933) *Introduction to the Science of Language*, was filled with detailed examples from a broad spectrum of languages and copious references to writers, past and present, who had contributed significantly to the study of language. He provided both an exemplary study of historical linguistics as well as a comprehensive history of linguistics, and his theory of the evolution of human consciousness was an overriding theme throughout his work. For Sayce, the evolution of consciousness was an integral part of the science of language because it positioned it within the context of the emerging sciences of his day.

Margaret Thomas (Boston College)

William Wood’s New England’s Prospect and language learning in colonial New England

Wood’s 1634 text contains amateur observations of a variety of Eastern Algonquian, and a word list. Despite some inaccuracies, it contributes to our knowledge of the language. Moreover, Wood adds to our understanding of 17th-century colonists’ experiences of language learning: in particular, to the asymmetry in the linguistic encounter between colonists and indigenous peoples they encountered. That asymmetry which shows up in the non-reciprocity of who learned whose language; in the nature and status of the pidgins that emerged from contact between the two groups; and in the differential means by which colonists versus Native Americans learned each other’s languages.

NAAHoLS 2019 DUES

Yearly Membership: \$20 (US)

Lifetime Membership: \$250 (US)

Please make your check out to "NAAHoLS" and send it to: David Boe,
Department of English, Northern Michigan University, Marquette, MI 49855.

Members from outside the United States: Our treasurer regrets that we are no longer able to accept checks written in currencies other than US Dollars. The cost of bank exchange is more than the cost of membership. We ask that those members send a check written on a US bank or pay their dues by some other means that arrives in US Dollars. We regret any inconvenience this may cause.

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