GEOLINGUISTIC REVIEWS

Michael Erard. Babel No More. New York &c.: Free Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 306 with Index. \$25.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

This is a highly commendable book (and charmingly entertaining) about polyglots who know half a dozen or maybe 11 different languages more or less well, maybe (some people say) never as proficient as a native in each and every one but able to leap the linguistic barriers between ordinary people from different cultures.

Babel No More is in fact itself polyglot in a way, able to speak fluenty the language of Robert Ripley ("Believe It or Not," full of astounding facts and incredible personages) and also that of language teachers (how does one learn a language, one's own or a foreign one? one does not simply pick one up "as if it had handles") and professional linguists (what physical and mental capacities are necessary to command language and how are languages constructed and developed, etc.). The book speaks of the science of the human brain and of the achievements and the psychology of obsessive language learners. It speaks of how polyglots can learn a number of languages, sometimes an amazing number (stick with language families "to rack up numbers"), but that no one can keep a very large number of foreign languages "active at a very high level at once". It even speaks the language of geolinguistics and is full of interesting facts. There are more than 30,000 schools of English in China. Two hundred years ago there were more than 100 languages spoken, mostly aboriginal, in what was to be the Republic and then the State of California and now in that state there are more than 100 languages spoken but most of the aboriginal languages are gone and some odd Asian ones have many speakers. One hundred years ago 23 percent of the US population "couldn't speak English at all". There are people who find it easier to learn grammar from language practice than practical language from grammar books. There are more speakers of English as a foreign language than there are speakers for whom English is the mother tongue, and in many countries in addition to the national language(s) English and other languages are officially imposed. Brazil the teaching of Spanish in the schools is compulsory. But officially or not the globalized world guarantees that in this or that city or country there are multiple languages at work and have effects. That is true of all languages that touch other languages. .

It 's said that on a daily basis as many as 70 percent of all interactions in English around the world occur between non-native speakers. This means that native English speakers have less control over determining the "proper" pronunciation and grammar of English.

Any reviewer with a fact-packed, fascinating book like this, so well written that one races through it easily experiencing delight after delight, is tempted to quote anecdotes about Giuseppi, Cardinal Mezzofanti (who spoke, he said, 50 languages "and his native "Bolognese") or Emil Krebs (a German diplomat who found command of 68 was useful in his work) or Erik V. Gunnemark (well known to readers of *Geolinguistics* and often referred to in this book) and other hyperglots. One learns that someone learned Armenian from scratch in about a month but that Chinese is far more demanding. One recognizes that some languages have much smaller vocabularies than others but also that merely expanding one's vocabulary is not the be all and the end of language learning. One is told of the vanity of hyperglots which keeps them striving even if learning languages seems easier to them than it is for most people and once one has many languages keeping each one up grows harder and harder, but one also that to learn one has to be ready to be laughed at when one makes mistakes. That's pretty obvious. One is told—you know this—that bilinguals are dominant in one language and almost always weaker in the other and that perfect pronunciation is easier to acquire than perfect conversation and that some who boast command of a number of languages have more than a few they have studied but may use only for reading or translation, not practicing oral skills and possibly not using at all. One of course finds reference to polyglot practice in

business but also in politics: Mithridates was supposed to be able to speak all 22 of languages of his kingdom but no czar of Russia, expectably, could manage all 70 of the languages of his empire.

Most of all Erard is reliably factual, for he is a journalist who digs and interviews and fills gaps in the narrative, and importantly he distinguishes myths from science, reputations from realities, as he tells the tales of striking language learners of the past and those whose abilities find useful employment in the many international organizations and tangles of ethnicities of the modern world.

Erard concludes with a marvelously concrete little chapter on things to keep in mind when attempting to learn foreign languages. He even refers to flash cards, the little monsters I remember from my cramming to pretend a reading knowledge of German for the PhD. French and Latin I had but when I started all I knew about German was that (a) it was supposed to be a very difficult if eminently logical language, (b) it certainly sounded harsh, and (c) nouns began with capital letters, something which English had given up a long time ago. I passed the exam but ever since I have never sat down with a dictionary to translate German if I can get anyone else to do that for me. Some of my writing on the occult has appeared in books called *Geschichte der Magie* and *Die Weltr der Magie* but I myself did not translate them. I am told the translations are good. A friend of mine who has a wicked tongue said my work "loses in the original". She means to say that in German the capital letters and long words add dignity to my discussion of the long story of humanity's sad and silly delusions about the supernatural and make my conclusions on superstition look scientific.

Indeed every language has a character and a unique take on the world. It is for that that each is most to be valued. With some 70 languages, including German, translated for you on the Internet and with hand-held devices that translate and can even speak languages well enough for tourist purposes, what is valuable and what is merely practical and what exactly is the future of the talented and driven individuals who undertake personally to counteract God's punishment at Babel?

Larissa Aronin & David Singleton. *Multilingialism*. Philadelphia &c..: John Benjamins, 2012. Pp. x, 239 with Index. \$49.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The knowledge and use of multiply languages in all aspects is the focus of this reliable paperback, expensive as all Benjamins' scholarly books are because of the smallish specialist market, #30 in the IMPACT series on language and society which includes many works of interest to geolinguists.

Starting with a sound definition of *multilingualism* and covering all the scholarship on this popular topic in sociolinguistics, the authors, both of Trinity College, Dublin, cover the arbitrariness of our sounds and letters and meaningful combinations of them, semancicity, displacement in space and time, dependence on structure, language as an ability and a tool, the whole "social life of language" and the way that those who command more than one language operate in Joshua Fishman's five domains: family, education, employment, friendship, and government and administration in one of three ways, to employ his/her native language, another learned language, or to switch back and forth from one to the other.

There now is "a far-reaching use in the world, by particular societies and by individuals, of more than two languages". In fact, English with its continual and extensive borrowings might be said to be becoming increasingly multilingual (and it is also borrowed for Singlish and Spanglish and such) and, though we seldom notice it, each of us if merely monolingual speaks and understands a number of ethnic and social dialects, formal and informal. We can likewise write in various dialects of our single language, depending on the audience or readership and the circumstances. We are you might say multilingual in our native language, and most educated persons have been given some instruction in a foreign language. The authors recommend the establishment of a full-fledged philosophy or theory of multilingualism. That will have to involve neurobiology more than these two authors have space or intent to include.

This book deals in bilingualism but also multilingualism and polyglottism in the modern, globalized world and touches on language teaching to children and adults, etc. It can teach readers of *Geolinguistics* much of value and would be perfect as a textbook for advanced undergraduates and graduate students in linguistics. It alerts us to certain problems in monolingualism, lingua fracas, dominate language, and the like, and most of all it addresses matters of current concern, on the foundation of scholarship, but likewise urges us to move on to look over what it calls the present "horizon".

Ee-Ling Low & Azirah Hashim, eds. *English in Southeast Asia: Features, Policy and Language in Use.* Philadelphis &c.: John Banjamins, 2012. Pp. xiv, 396 with Index. \$143.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Asia is but one area in which English and other languages interact and this collection of papers is the first to survey completely all the varieties of English used in the area, to describe them in nature and in use, and to give us a full picture of the penetration of English (especially British and America) into such areas as Singapore and Malaysia (respectively the homes of the editors). The different societies and their interests such as government, education, and business, are connected to language adoption and development. The extensive bibliography documents the fact that English (the official working language of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and other languages interacting in Southeast Asia has been a busy field of investigation but now that we have expert articles on Singapore English, Malaysian English, Brunei Runglish, Philippine English, Thai English, Hong Kong English, etc., and up-to-date information on language policies and practices in education and other fields we can see not only where we stand but where we might be headed. Among unusual aspects are considerations here of the computer world and advertising and other business also transfers of politeness strategies. There is information about Chinese and Japanese as well.

Isabelle Buchstaller & Ingrid Van Alphen, eds. *Quotatives: Socio-Linguistic and Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives.* Philadelphia &c.: John Nenjamins, 2012. Pp. xxx, 296 with Index. \$143.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Have you heard "I was like-wow!" and "She was like, y'know, awesome" and "I was [thinking] that's great"? This sort of thing occurs not only in English but in a variety of other languages: Dutch, German, Greek, Hebrew, Icelandic, Italian, Norwegian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, etc. Now the lot is subjected to close analysis by the experts assembled by the editors, respectively from Leipzig and Amsterdam. They do far better than anyone earlier who touched on the subject in some kind of discourse analysis. There are old and new quotatives deserving special attention and here they get it. We discover that quotatives can be helpful. Sometimes the hearer or reader is assisted to understand better by a comparison ("this is like"). Increasingly, however, like is used to avoid specificity and responsibility or precision, especially in the US where, "if you will" and "you know" are heard repeatedly. Has political correctness made us wussy, tentative, leery of exciting disagreement, or are we getting so little interested in other people's ideas? Or is it more aggressive in our increasingly contentious society? You will have noted that US politicians are starting to refuse to listen to their opponents, not merely determined never to compromise with them but unwilling to hear a word they say. We are settling for the good enough, the approximation as well as the ersatz and shoddy. Coinages such as "cool" and "awesome" are used so much that the declared value on them is totally rubbed off. There is a lot of what linguists call uplifting, a great many declarative statements ending with a rising tone so as to seem more like a question than a remark.

In this contribution to Benjamins' series on Converging Evidence in Language and Communication Research this solid survey by 16 experts shows conclusively that the seldom discussed question of quotatives. *Quotative* a word that many readers of *Geolinguistics* may never have encountered before though what the word designates they surely have seen. This is well worth digging into and rewards

being separated from sociological and linguistic investigations of the past. Old and new ways of reporting speech, thoughts, attitudes, physical activity and appearances are part and parcel of diurnal communication. They have their characteristics and their uses, even if sometimes they are not admired. *Like* in US speech has been widely derided as airheaded Californian, Valley Girl stupid, but it is by no means limited to adolescent females or the Left Coast. It is, in fact, an indicator of something truly disturbing in the modern American character, not simply a verbal annoyance. It tells us something sociodynamic just as does, for example, the wide current use of "do you see what I'm saying? and "d'y unnstan?".

Why are some people, "you know," constantly checking? Is it because they are really aware that their education has been so inadequate that they are not getting across? Does this sort of thing tell us not only about language but also about life in the US, about fathers who will not pay child support, about mortgage holders who want to walk away from their debts, about corporations who pay fines for illegality if and when caught but "admit no responsibility," and selfishness and situational ethics and, not to go on too long about this, the hordes of people who will not keep their promises or pay their debts and make (say) conscription a political impossibility. They do not want to serve their country either. They are to put it bluntly irresponsible, I mean *tooootalllly*. What the hell, why pay your debts? Go bankrupt. Household appliance or household partner not working well? Throw out and replace, not repair. Problems very great? Forget about courage, taking pains to solve difficulties,. The new mantra is

When duty whispers low "Thou must" The youth replies "Hell, no!"

If the national debt is in trillions and the national infrastructure would cost an incredibly huge effort to repair or the environment or the illegal aliens or any other problem demands persistence and pain and stick-to-itive-ness –fuggedabowdit. To examine challenges clearly and attack them energetically is a downer, man. Unless it's a no-brainer, no interest. No, not all Americans, but many Americans, far too many Americans. Just listen to them!

We are perhaps the worst, perhaps not. Who cares to argue about that? You? The likes of *like* has been discovered and denounced in Dutch and deplored in modern Hebrew. It is in fact noticeable in many other languages. Their experts report or skirt reporting exactly what others have said or felt in the past insofar as today's solipsistic individuals know or really care about other people and "where they are coming from"—or may have experienced. Or are feeling (rather than thinking?) right now. Such people seldom care much (like, a rat's ass, if you know what I mean) about precise details of similarity and manner. They are vague about hard it is to pin down the emotional states of others. Their use of verbs such as *do* and *go* (sometimes they use *goes* for *says*) is unreliable. They never heard of deitics and presentatives and addressee-referring pronominals and other exotic aspects of language that remain but remain unknown to ill-educated Americans. Americans do not appear to be learning much grammar in what we used to call grammar schools. Have you or your children ever passed a course in logic? It's gone, with civics courses. Most astoundingly, in a world in which science and technology has made miraculous advances in precision, to some extent these very advances appear to have made life easier and personal thinking and responsibility less definite, less flawless.

. Language as always reflects the mindset, the vowels the wobbly values and the consonants the confusions. "Speak that I may know you." As the great Yogi Bera once remarked, and I may not be quoting him word for word but you get the idea, "You can hear a lot just by listening".

Andrew Blum. Tubes: A Journey to the Center of the Internet. New York: Viking, 2012. Pp. 304. \$26.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

He is a reporter with a knack for explaining and with expertise. He writes for *Wired*. Blum gives us an understanding of the physical aspects of the Internet, the greatest network ever created. It is not vaguely "in the cloud" but material in computers and under the ocean in fiber cable and in exchanges in

Amsterdam, Frankfurt, and London. It is a modern marvel which has connected people as never before and has profoundly reinvented communication. Like all advanced science it looks rather magical. Students of geolinguistics should read this book to grasp how a force that is altering information exchange worldwide and the languages that are employed. Incidentally, the cyberage has created a whole new idea of literacy and a whole new division of haves and have-nots socially. Technology, whether for daily chatting or in language labs for teaching foreign languages or on the Internet, personal computers and laptops and personal hand-held devices, is something linguists need to know more about. It shapes language in action.

This book does not take into account possible drastic changes in our communication systems. The Internet and other earthly communication systems are at the mercy of the sun and its solar flares, one every few minutes, and a big flare could destroy our system. There have been large solar flares in the past and more to be expected. Meanwhile we have more than 700 satellites in space and all of them are bombarded constantly by particles from the sun and in dire danger of destruction. Technology at present has no idea whatever about how to combat solar weather. As we perfect and extend current technologies of communication we need to pay attention to developing if we can alternate technologies.

What those technologies may be is impossible for me to guess but I truly expect them to be as revolutionary as the amazing devices of communication already developed and perhaps more surprising. The pace of technological development has been—and this at least was securely predicted—astonishing. We still have not fully grasped the vast changes that what we have now has altered communication and the all the languages in which it takes place. The whole communication system of the past is already as slang says "down the tubes".

Libraries are being digitized. Even old motion pictures are being digitized,. We are being digitized. To the nation that coined *tubesteak* for the frankfurter, Frankenstein "tubes" are putting everything at stake.

Daniel L. Everett. *Language: The Cultural Tool.* New York: Pantheon, 2012. Pp. xii, 351 with Index. \$27.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The only dull thing about this book is its simply ugly book jacket. Although language as a cultural tool has long been discussed, here at last we have a strong attack on Noam Chomsky's idea of deep structure. Everett presents what many will regard as proof positive that language springs as a practical cognitive technology for the creation of social communities. A dean now at Bentley University, Everett spent 30 year among the Piranhã in the jungles of the Amazon and has discovered that the nature and the limitations of their language disprove Chomskian pronouncements. In fact, their language lacks certain basic structures that have widely been thought to be universal. It has quite a number of astounding rarities if not as many as another Brazilian jungle language called Wari,' which may hold the record for unusual aspects.

Languages like animals may develop extraordinarily different characters and capacities given isolation and peculiar circumstances. *Pace* the Creationists, they were not whimsically made whimsically by God but evolved methodically to cope with reality and survival. They took on shapes and habits dictated by their environment and circumstances. Language is not inbred; language has evolved as a practical tool in different ways in different societies. Language and the mind are not as we have previously imagined them to be. They have immensely different grammars, structures, practical uses in strange circumstances. Language vitality and language variety are much greater than we have believed. Languages are in constant flux and technology, for instance, can set them off in unexpected directions. Think of how printing affected spelling and how hand-held electronic devices right now are unceasing but condensing communications.

The Piranhã do not limit themselves to 140 characters but they string words together in ways users of western languages will find incredible. They convey ideas and emotions in ways we do not. Their language is not inferior—languages should not be categorized from outside as superior or inferior—but it is strikingly different. We stand astonished, for example, at the fact that these people function with no concepts of color or number. We have heard of western languages in which green and blue are not distinguished. We may have noticed that red is described in Spanish as the equivalent of "colored" while other colors are not. We know that in some African languages there is counting only as far as two—one, two, many. Some African languages have no word for *tree* but have a different name for each kind of tree known to them. You have heard all that before. In this book you will hear of new marvels. Moreover, everyone knows that some languages are SVO (Subject, Verb, Object, which seems to speakers of English the only logical approach) and others are not. But look at this jungle tongue—and recognize that it works. With all the details of the Amazonian language he has studied Everett makes the point that speakers of a language may understand things that the language does not express and all speakers of any language use a tool which has been developed for societal communication and cohesion under the conditions of the lives of the people involved. That is how we act, this is how we think, and this is who we are.

His earlier book about field work in the Amazon, *Don't Sleep, There are Snakes* was exciting. This one, *Language: The Cultural Tool* is in linguistic circles earth shaking. The debates have already begun, and the established authorities have a lot to lose and apparently will go down battling to the last. One thing about languages, and all the people who speak them in all their variety, seems to be that each and every group is totally convinced that their way is the only way. Entrenched (and embattled) linguists remind me of some satiric verse from a long time ago when students at Oxford wrote a *Masque of Balliol* and mocked the arrogance of its head:

First come I. My name is Jowett. There is no knowledge but I know it. I am the Master of this College And what I don't know isn't knowledge

Pierfranca Forchini. *Movie Language Revisited*. New York &c.: Peter Lang, 2012. Pp. 142 with graphs, etc. \$47.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Motion pictures were at first simple newsreel clips, then had story lines if only on 50 feet of celluloid, then Broadway plays staged outdoors in the California sunlight, then silent epics. Fairly soon movies began to talk although the acting suffered from the fact that many stars came from the so-called legitimate theater and were accustomed to delivery, facial expressions and gestures designed to carry to the back of large auditoriums, quite unsuited to the camera up close. Over time the movie actors learned to converse, not orate, to do more with less exaggeration. Now move language can even involve subtle facial expressions ("less is more") and whispered dialogue. Though learned and delivered dialogue is different from spontaneous conversation modern realism demands that it appear conversational and spontaneous. No, the silver screen world is not real, but to many it appears real and a lot of people are trending to look at life as a movie in which they star. I'll rabbit on about this because you and I know and love the movies.

This book takes a corpus of American movie language. It submits it to Biber's "muti-dimensional analysis". It compares it with a corpus of everyday American speech. Forchini concludes that ordinarily, but not in biblical epic or gangster or other stylized speech, of course, there is little difference between how people speak in the movies and how they speak in everyday American life. Yes, there has to be enough reality in ethnic and social strata speech to convince the popcorn cruncher in the cinema seats or in front of the television or, these days, streaming movies on small devices. The characters do seem real. The actors conversing appear recognizably like ordinary Americans in face-to-face conversation, even when the actors may be engaged in extraordinarily romantic or violent or even historic situations. In a Merchant Ivory sort of classics-to-screen production the furniture may be genuinely antique and the costumes researched to be

authentic but you may have noticed that the faces are irredeemably current. People who lived in Jane Austen's or some other major author's past time may have dressed as we see them now but their noses were different than ours. Did you know that? They did not speak Mod Brit or American lingo. *Shakespeare in Love* was not presented with the accents of Shakespeare's own time. That would have sounded less comprehensible, even more Irish than English, to us now. Even when there is no "OK, Pharaoh" gaffe in dialogue one always has to work with modern performers. Dialogue coaches cannot work miracles nor, for (say) *Troy* would they have been able to do much for Brad Pitt, the principal visual. Turn off the sound on your TV and watch a motion *picture*. You won't miss too much. It's a visual medium.

The book argues that movies can be used to study and teach natural spoken language. I think it's off the mark in that respect. The talkies talk Hollywood, not Main Street, to a great extent. Realistic is not the same as real. When the talkies arrived US actors, previously chosen mostly for their looks, were given elocution lessons. They were made to sound rather British, certainly "actorish". Today few actors—the word serves now for both sexes—are "gentlemanly" or sound sophisticated. (Victorian extras were called "walking ladies and gentlemen" even though acting was not considered a gentlemanly profession.} In fact The Profession (the stage) and The Industry (the movies) have had precious few upper-class performers, or speakers, or for that matter screenwriters. There are few American writers from high society. It would be difficult to list more than Edith Wharton and Louis Auchincloss, because US fiction and drama writing are more or less lower middle-class work even if some writers become wealthy, largely by giving up the baby to be adopted and adapted in Hollywood. Moreover, movie actors were not born with silver spoons in their mouths. They are never originally from the 1 percent, though a few may marry into it or earn a place.

Movie actors are mostly cast to play themselves these days, though the hoofer from Nebraska may be made suave. The concept of acting has been redefined. Movie actors are not usually asked to be but to seem, not to demonstrate obvious histrionic skill but to be "real". They are not really real. After all they have been directed to utter only words that were written for them and writers have their individual styles. The actor's style owes most to what (s)he is given to say. Audiences actually believe that that actor is a witty person or a grande dame or something else they really are not in everyday life. They are in two senses of the term made up. Offscreen Humphrey Bogart was neither tough nor of the lower middle class. John Wayne (Marion Morrison) was originally a football player, not a cowboy. He never served in the military. Offscreen some sexy bimbo may be an intellectual, highly cultivated. I once met Jayne Mansfield and we chatted about how she wanted to play Shakespeare "but all they can see is a broad with big boobs". As a movie actor you are given a screen persona. The audience tends to think of you as that kind of person, taking the mask for the face. For the silent movies a girl from Brooklyn could pass as an exotic Theda Bara, an Eastern European as a WASP, anybody as anything they could convincingly look like. Once they spoke, however, complications arose. When the talkies came in, after two years of the two dozen leading silent stars only a couple were still viable and working. Speech could not be handled as easily as physical appearance but the movies work wonders. Alan Ladd, like Douglas Fairbanks, was very small for an action hero but cinematographers could handle them. When Ladd had to walk beside a tall heroine they were photographed from the waist up and she had to walk in a trench. Many a beauty had one "good side".

In the movies, certain genre constraints as well as problems about how "black" African-Americans can sound without being incomprehensible to white audiences, how tough guys and aliens and vampires and supermen and so on are supposed to speak, etc. Sometimes the speech is pretty close to reality and sometimes it is very artificial. Movie speech even in the age of *verité* is made up. It is based more or less but not precisely on ordinary American. There is, you know, a lot of mush-mouth, stuttering, fruitiness, and so on that is not usually politically correct for the movies. But then some movies are targeted for those speakers and actors drawn from those classes are recruited for the screen. Hollywood invents certain rules, for example turning down (a little) the obscenity in ghetto or soldier speech or deciding (as *Esquire* once noted) that "villains walk slowly and speak with foreign accents". Minority activists put pressure on Hollywood (and TV and all the media) not to portray their worst qualities. They want "fairness" and "respect". They demand and if powerful enough get a "good image," with speech to match. Today the media reflect, rather than dictate. It's a business; the consumer is offered only what (s)he will buy.

In the late 17th and early 18th centuries the stage was licensed by the establishment and didactic. It taught upwardly striving audiences how to dress and how to speak. Plays tried to inculcate social grace and

moral values. Time was when stage comedy preached and centuries later married couples in movies had to sleep in twin beds. On a couch or a bed, necking couples had to keep one foot each on the floor, .It was a long time before the first "four-letter word" was spoken from the movie screen, on the radio, from the television screen. Actual language was cleaned up in the media until the *vulgus* embraced the vulgar.

Drama certainly established what we now call lifestyles. Colley Cibber in the early 18th century peopled his plays with dashing figures he met with in London society. He presented their attitudes and their ways of tying a cravat or handling a situation or a fan.. His plays were watched for useful information by the eager to rise theatergoers. In more recent times the movies taught the general public how to flirt, how to smoke a cigarette, and how to speak, but right now the movies "echo back the public voice" (as Dr. Johnson put it even in the 18th century) and they are chiefly directed at teenagers and adults who like to sex and violence and things blown up and people "blown away". Dialogue is less important than it used to be. Zombies and explosions are challenging the popularity even of sex bombs and nuclear bombs, vamps and vampires. Those facts, naturally, carry a message about us, too. In this reviewer's latest book, more than 500 pages on all aspects of the subject, Halloween, the most popular secular holiday and a centerpiece of popular culture, there are sections not only on costumes and trick-or-treat, parades and parties, folklore and literature but also and at length a history of the movie horror genre, the gothic and the gory, from the beginning until now in the most powerful and widespread US literature of today, the motion picture. Among comments on hundreds of scary movies to watch at Halloween (and all year round) there happens to be a serious discussion of movie zombies as related to the dangers of the political rise of the oppressed, the "dead" of capitalism," the walking dead of a horror craze and a financial collapse. Even in wholly imaginary characters created for public diversion (from what?) and approbation (why?) and making a buck (of course) there is important information on real life and popular culture. The same goes for language.

The difference between the spoken language of everyday and the usual written language is not terribly great today—70 percent of the spoken words are used in most writing—but the language of the entertainment media is contrived, censored, manipulated. It's art. It is not pure everyday American at all.

Nancy L, Coleman & Olav Veka. *A Handbook of Scandinavian Names*. Madison (WI): University of Wisconsin Press, 2010. Pp. xviii, 195. \$27.95 paperback, \$14.95 e-book.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Ola J. Holten, a Norwegian living in Sweden, and myself worked a while on a book like this because such a book was quite necessary but we were distracted by our *Nordic Folklore and Tradition* (2011) and now we see that this book under review admirably does what is needed with 1,500 given names of Norway, Sweden. Denmark, Iceland, and Finland, put in context, with etymologies, meanings, history, etc. There are photos, maps, and charts. The whole is very scholarly, very satisfactory, now standard. Historic emigration to the Americas will make this book of interest on this side of the world as well as in all other English-speaking areas. The authors are highly unformed, utterly reliable, and they write entertainingly.

Geolinguistically given names which write a script for the lives of their bearers are closely tied to individual and group identities. They are among other things markers not only of ethnicity and nationality and genealogy but of social class. There is likewise something to be said about surnames and social class, names taken from family farms long held, the Latinization of certain scholars' names in early times, the influence of Germany as a nearby site of high culture, of the introduction of the names of Christian saints (Chritianity arrived in Scandinavia about a millennium after the birth of Christ but the older pagan heritage is still seen in many forenames as well as place names), etc. Font names from Christian saints tell one story. Another story is told of the patriarchal that is evidenced in the old Scandinavian *X* son of *Y* system. In that system the son of Erik Larsson might be Lars Eriksson and naturally bureaucrats were much confused by that. So inheritable surnames were instituted—in Sweden when Swedes joined armed forces they took so-called: "soldier names"—and in time there was a need for, for example, some way of dealing with so many unrelated people being called by the very common name Larsen to be dealt with. The Danish

government actually paid some people to adopt less common surnames. The desire for individuality feeds into the adoption of unusual forenames but there is far less of that in Scandinavia than in the US. The presence of peoples such as the Sami naturally produces names not usual in the larger population.

In the US among Scandinavian immigrants some older forenames continued in common use after they went out of fashion in the Old Country. In the US some non-Scandinavians looking for unusual names have adopted Scandinavian names. The Green family oddly named children Emerald, Kelly, and Leif.

Anne Cutler. *Native Listening: Language Experience and the Recognition of Spoken Words*. Cambridge (MA): MIT Press, 2012. Pp. xxviii, 555 with Index. \$50.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

This is a heavy book and reading it is a heavy slog. The use of terms such as pseudohomophones is only to be expected. Specialists usually write for specialists, especially in science, which is unfortunate because science has to rely so much on public money and needs to communicate its importance to its backers, indeed owes the backers some understandable reports. This book it essentially deal with a topic that can be of interest to the average person but truly it is not for them. But the general linguist who sticks through it from "How Universal is Listening?" to the last of the chapter conclusions, "Universal and Language Specific," will gain a pretty complete history and analysis of listening. Not adequately covered are non-human sounds and noises and phonetic acquisition and a few other things. It seems a shame to nitpick when there is so much offered but it is fair to say, for instance, that there is not quite enough attention to the fact that native speakers often have considerable difficulty understanding some of the supposedly comprehensible dialects of their language. Just how much comprehension does this or that dialect receive from other speakers and what. If that can be determined, are the aspects of a dialect that makes it "difficult"? What are the causes and limits of slurred and mumbled and what I call mush-mouth dialects? What is the frank and fearless academic discussion of them? Heavily documented—the bibliography is stunning—are various other aspects of publication to date considering one of the most important sides of human communication: the listener to speech not only in English but also in Dutch and Japanese. Why for smaller languages more than larger cultures such as French, German, or Spanish, and why almost no mention of Russian or the languages of Africa and India with so many speaker?

While, we are taking this tack, so much linguistic advance in certain languages and countries and not in others? This is a geolinguistic fact and an interesting scientific question.

It is obvious that communication in any and all places involves not only transmitter but also receptor. So naturally neurologists and physiologists have studied the human organs for creating language while other scientists have concentrated on those who hear and interpret what they hear, those who perform the many mental actions that are involved in hearing and registering, as well as those who for one reason or another "do not listen" or cannot. It is significant that not paying attention has recently been promoted to Attention Deficit Disorder, that autism has become so widespread and is being so energetically addressed, even that partisan politics has recently produced far more "not listening" to the other side than ever before and that political correctness has undertaken to rule against what people "don't want to hear". The amount of study of what might seem simple, the understanding of speech and hearing in our native languages, is astounding. On this solid book you will learn much about what is language-specific and what is universal, a matter with immense geolinguistic importance.

One of the things that you may never have thought about is tracking the boundaries between words. In writing there are usually more obvious spaces between words, although this was not always so. Early writing ran all the words together one letter or ideograph after the other. To what extent does speech do that? Fuggedaboudit. We say that languages such as German that might have a single word for the equivalent of English's *head station master* or *acting deputy chief inspector* are "difficult" but in speech these expressions function pretty much as single words. Locatives in toponymy such as *the little convenience store on Avenue H that stays open late but charges far too much* uses a lot of words where X's

Deli would do. To what extent is a language such as English in which spelling and pronunciation are often quite different a problem for the hearer? In other words, how much do we distinguish between what we hear and what we see written down and why do we resort to (say) at this particular point in time when <u>now</u> requires less energy to process going and coming? Why do poets reading their work intone? Just because it is "easier to hear"? I think not. Do ritual speech and secular oratory have different deliveries and intentions in different languages? Do different cultures have different reasons for sotto voce and yelling? Different languages have different rhythms. Why, and to what effect upon the speaker and listener?

In connection with *tonelag* in Norwegian, the subject of a paper by Ola J. Holten of Sweden on language tones read at the 2012 conference of ASG, I have been thinking a lot lately about what I call the tunes to which various languages as sung and the fact that within a language, or at least within a language that is not tonal like Chinese, one can by raising or lowering the voice or adopting a different melody communicate such things are, determination, disbelief, irony, sarcasm uncertainty, etc. One can mock and intone and create many other sorts of coloration of communication. This book does not go into matters like that but they do get involved with sending and receiving. More needs to be done to cover such aspects are volume and melody and spacing in speech. Are there different ways in different languages for sounding persuasive or commanding or sincere or, a very geolinguistic thing, polite? Certainly.

Geolinguists ought also to dig deeper into the extent to which foreign accents and foreign languages allegedly spoken "too fast" and social accents of the native culture affect the way we receive and judge spoken communication. They might also take up the social and political fallout of the fact that men tire of women's voices when subjected to hearing them for some time. We tune out. Science can explain what constitutes an authoritative voice or a "pleasant" voice in various societies and why at least in English, and I suspect in other languages, it has been established that listening to the speech of females involves more mental processing than listening to the voices of males but the sociolinguistic aspects are the responsibility of geolinguistics to explain.

Do you want a project? Why not examine the incidence in various US social classes of incredibly common expressions such as *y'hear?*, *y'undrsterstan'?*, *you see where I'm coming from?*, and the like. What do they tell us? Something worth hearing, I am sure.

When we fix our attention on such things the word *geolinguistics* may start to appear in the indexes of books like this one, a book in which even onomastics--how a personal or other name is spelled is a frequent question in conversation--does not appear in the immense Listening, however, is a too neglected aspect of language education and undoubtedly a too neglected aspect of writing about macrosociolinguistics.

Jeremy Waldron. *The Harm in Hate Speech*. Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 2012. Pp. x, 292. \$26.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Though a professor of law at New York University and a major social theorist Waldron really avoids taking sides in the constitutionality of making some speech illegal in order to protect Americans, all belonging to one minority or another and of a dazzling number of religions both domestic and imported, from nasty remarks, called *hate speech*. This dangerous even though some of it must be admitted to be simply censorious, unkind, or (a nasty word in the US these days) *judgmental*. To what extent should a government control the expression of opinion by its citizens in order to protect the feelings of the sensitive? Suppose it's the lives of the vulnerable.

It goes farther than simply annoying or offending citizens. Hate can lead to far worse things. That is basically why anti-defamation groups have sprung into action; they are determined to protect their members from far greater dangers than insult. Of course it is legal for anti-defamation groups to get together to express their views but are they entitled to repress the expression of other people's views? Do

we need for single-agenda minorities laws that guarantee them security from sticks and stones as well as words? "Can't we all get along?" You bet, if you'll obey. Harmony at what cost to freedom?

It comes down to the question of, in our highly competitive, multilingual and multicultural society, with each of us in one or more touchy minorities, how much of our vaunted freedom of speech can be tolerated, how much tolerance can be expected, how much attack on personal pride and human dignity can we or should we permit under other guarantees of liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

I feel at liberty to say that whether you agree with or disagree with Waldron's arguments you will find the book informed and stimulating. As an American you may be unlikely change your mind about anything but that does not give you a license never to pay attention to people who are wise.

To my mind people ought to be free to say anything that is not treasonable or incitement to riot. not expressed dislike of others and their opinions or actions or faces but a call to smash them. Nasty speech and violence are not quite the same thing though both can hurt. But where it's comng from is \important and useful in judging attacks. "Know your enemy." The other side ought to be allowed to respond within legal limits. It seems to me that although that will surely make for a very contentious society it is useful, nay essential, that each side be as able as possible to make its case and be as acquainted as possible with what the opposition has to say and perhaps plans to do. I have no objection to what I call the Kooky Klutz Klan marching. I think we need to know how many of them are around. I would ban hoods. They should how their faces, and we can know who they are. I don't like the dirty politics of the 2012 campaign ads on TV but I do want to know whether the candidate stands behind them or not. I would have preferred a campaign in which clear platforms of what each candidate thinks he can and cannot accomplish in future but what we have had is personality not political platforms, one candidate trying to introduce himself and the other trying to excuse himself. You may or may not agree. I'm just telling you what I think. I don't actually think either personality matters because as always Americans are simply going to vote their pocketbooks. No political rhetoric (did you hear any hate speech in anything?) will change that.

If people are going to work harm, for their political parties or for themselves as individuals, to identify them, even to hear their grievances and judge their motives and strength, is crucial. I am for fairness as well. If I got into politics I am aware I would be inviting attack. If in private life someone calls me a vicious name I might want to ignore it or to respond unkindly in kind. Maybe I would excuse "undignified" retaliation as "the only kind of language they know". Surely I might object to some minorities, long oppressed, now being more oppressive of Little Me. I would not welcome others allowed to get away with racial and religious insults to which the law says I cannot react. My religion says "turn the other cheek" and love my enemies but I am, like almost all fellow Christians, not *that* religious. My personal rule is: treat me with respect and I will treat you with respect. Be nice and I'll be nice. Don't insult my race or religion or cherish beliefs and I won't insult yours. If you act respectably (my definition, of course) you will not have to worry about being *dissed* (treated with disrespect). If you are not respectable I reserve the right, indeed may feel an obligation, to set you right. Let us all be considerate of others, as polite and peaceable as possible, and as free to speak our minds as the constitution says.

It would be nice if no one were prejudiced but I do not expect that. Religions absolutely forbid it. So "come out, come out, wherever you are" with your real selves if you must and let us all be able to act and react in a world of clear realities. Let us not expect or pretend to agree on everything and let us agree to disagree as fellow citizens and fellow human beings. Let communication be considerate if possible but most of all "fair and balanced".

Auden says we must "love one another or die". I say "we must love one another or say so honestly" if and when required, preferably thereafter striving sincerely to find a way to love if not cherish or respect and obey. Hidden prejudice can at times be more dangerous than prejudice out in the open. I will not accept your repressive political correctness to silence me because you want to avoid being offended. You might possibly be offensive to me! I may simply ignore that and go on or I may exercise my "inalienable right" to let you know "in no uncertain terms" if I really believe that any good might come of that. (If not, not. But my choice.) I hate the new idea that discrimination is evil. The most fundamental necessity in life is to discriminate between right and wrong as God (or Whatever) gives us the grace to see

what is right and wrong. Color, religion, political party, social status, etc.—none of these guarantees exclusive possession of infallibility absolutely never the power to define right and wrong for others not of our condition and persuasions. Let them go their ways and He (or She) will sort things out.

I hate supposed revelations from Him (or Her) that have made people of faith detest and kill each other. I hate broccoli and transfats and the pomposity of celebrity chefs. I hate the very idea of being forced to live among hypocrites and gagged individuals and smiling villains and self-serving martinets. There, I've said it.

Joan C. Beal, Lourdes Burbano-Elizondo & Carmen Llamas. *Urban North-Eastern English: Tyneside to Teesside*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 114 with Index. \$32.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

In the University of Edinburgh's noted series on the dialects of English which has already offered useful books on Indian English, Singlish of Singapore, Hong Kong English, New Zealand English, Northern and Insular Scots and the English of Northern Ireland, now comes a concise but very interesting book on the dialects of England's Northeast, Newcastle and Tynside (Geordie), Sunderland and Wearside, and Middlesborough and Teesside. The lexicon but also the pronunciation and structural features etc. are carefully examined in both the geographical and historical contexts because there is a lot more to dialects than such unusual names for *sweets* (standard British for what Americans call candy) than *bulllets* and *keks*, words heard in this area of interest.

The Geordies of Newcastle will say (for example) our Raymond when speaking of him to a member of the family but wor Raymond to everyone else. An only child will say our Mam instead of "my mother". A request from a single person may be "Giz us it". Where elsewhere in the UK a barmaid might address a customer as love a Geordie might say (s)he does not love and indeed does not even know the person and so use the term of endearment pet. I learned Geordie from a little book called Larn Yersel' Geordie and have written about it elsewhere but the matter is presented here in this book in a more scholarly fashion and it is noted that some of the dialect is not known or not used by the younger Despite the BBC and movies and other media enough of a difference in speech is apparent that any Geordie is recognizable as soon as speech occurs and that even Oxbridge may not erase the pride or the basic identity of the Geordie. The graduate may still speak Geordie; it shows how far he has come along in life.

It is to be noted that in addition to being a factor in personal identity some dialect words and constructions care strictly limited to a region, others pass into nearby regions, and there is some slang shared with the whole of England. The real problems arise, when dialects which are by definition comprehensible to outsiders who speak the same language confuse, when a word that has a more standard meaning has a quite different meaning in a dialect. Two examples are *spice* (in one region meaning candy) and *paddock* (in one region usually meaning toad, sometimes frog), which are of course not the usual UK meanings. Some slang such as *netty* (usually elsewhere *loo* from French *l'eau*, the UK WC or water closet, toilet) has crept into the region from outside. "You are angry, you" reminds us of the usual UK "That's alright, then" but "I'll manage but" sounds strange. "This is geet hard" for "This is very hard" baffles strangers. Sometimes you think you hear Scots (*bairn* for baby, *gannin'* for *goin'*) but Georgie is not Scots.

"He wouldn't could've work if you had asked him."

"He would do nothing without you saying."

"She said she'd return but she never."

These are regionalisms that mark the speaker of Northeastern English. Every region has its differences and differences, social dialects, regional dialects, always can lead to misunderstandings and even to disparagement. There are geolinguistic consequences.

Kenneth Goldsmith. *Uncreative Writing*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 260 with Index. \$22.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

First of all, all writing is creative, but let that pass. What Goldsmith's book concentrates on is the fact that new methods of communication such as texting and tweeting and blogging and so on have significantly altered what we say and who we say it to. Goldsmith is a poet who presented some of the material included in this book on the Poetry Foundation web site as well as elsewhere poets might look and here presents matters of style as well as content. He speaks of the techniques of cutting and pasting, databasing, programming and other realities of the cyberage and how they can enlarge and enrich our modern communications. He examines appropriation and even suggests that online searches can be a new way of creating poetry. Of course we need a sounder definition than is usually of the word *poetry* because these days there seems to be a widespread conviction that any collection of words can be one of those creations rich in ambiguity which people like to call poetry and also that if you break up prose and stagger the lines on a page you have written poetry by some arcane alchemy. That is nonsense.

Goldsmith looks into various texts, even robo-poetics, and discourses. He is often witty about how the Internet can and does create and reconfigure texts. He teaches what he calls uncreative writing at the University of Pennsylvania where fledgling poets are encouraged to put together straws and strings of words to make a nest from which to soar on wings of inspiration. Is this "for the birds"? Does the cyber machine offer us the stupendous but unreal device that Jonathan Swift spoke of that somehow would enable the writing of poetry (and philosophy, and plays, and novels, and everything) "with little bodily labour...without the least assistance from genius or study". It doesn't. If it did that would well suit the majority of the current generation, some might say. To the keyboard! How cool is that? Cool is the new, loose, largely uncommitted style that Alan Lui in *The Laws of Cool* claims exploits the lazy and uses the slack in technological and linguistic and other systems, a subculture's of the rebellious and those who refuse to be forced to choose, who demand individuality rather than community, freedom from the rules and contradictions in western society, from regulation and responsibility.

Goldsmith says that on the Internet we can run the gamut from authenticity to total fabrication. But all communication has to be fabricated, in the sense of *made* rather than in the sense of *false*. The very name *fiction* says the narrative is constructed, invented. What is iffy is if any useful invention is taking place. If it is then we still have the question as to what we communicate is what the speaker says or the writer writes or what the hearer hears or the reader makes of what (s)he reads. In a lot of modern art, including verbal art, there is accident or nonsense or simply the will to be known for making something which contains no message from the creator at all but which, whether it be an art gallery with a load of sand on the floor or some objects more or less randomly placed in a so-called installation, or a stand of bamboo on a museum roof, or (as we say now) whatever, is the creator's intention and content communicated? Is a message delivered? In any case, faced with anything, the recipient will make something of it him- or herself. That is the nature of the human mind. We try to give some meaning.

Sign a urinal you find and exhibit it as sculpture. Go a bit farther and line a teacup with fur. What is being said? Does who said it matter? Who cares if it is true that "the author is dead"? Some oddities such as a Campbell's soup can or a crucifix in urine or the "artist"'s feces in a tin can have more of a deliberate message. So might even so-called poet Jordan Scott's list of the words as a stutterer he has difficulty getting out. So he performs this piece as a poetry reading, stuttering. Even the strange titles that Damien Hirst gives to such "sculptures" as a shark or a dove in a tank of formaldehyde, even if one cannot image how a pompous title of the work relates to the object, will set viewers thinking and arguing. Sol LeWitt says you don't need skill in art. To my mind he proves it. The only impressive thing LeWiit ever did in my view was to change *Levitt* to *LeWitt*—and were I Jewish I think I would resent that but as I am not it is not for me to judge.

All communication is up to the receiver to judge. So don't say "I don't like that piece of art". Say "I don't like what I make of that piece of art".

Fine art? Why not paint nudes? Get your model nude, paint the body, instruct the model them to roll across a canvas. Or put a canvas flat in the backyard, get up on the roof, and pour some paint down. I used to make big paintings like that for friends who wanted some modern piece over the sofa. I could even match the sofas. Why not be simpler and do Color Field; use a big canvas and a paint roller. Don't tell me lots of square feet of scarlet doesn't Make a Statement! For more variety for your coming retrospective, slash some of the canvases. You can't sell a load of bricks to The Tate and get a free trip to go and Install It. That's been done. But you could doodle something on a cocktail napkin and get workmen to make it 30 feet high, Chrome plated. Why not, as mentioned by Goldsmith, turn a pinball machine into "a metagraphic-spatial composition entitled *Thermal Sensations and Desires of People Passing by the Gates of the Cluny Museum Around an Hour After Sunset in November*?" If it looks more like late August to me. so what? I sometimes by accident get radio stations broadcasting in languages I do not understand and I even hear rap and pop songs and def poetry supposedly in English that I can't grasp. They may be communicating something to someone else. To me it's garbage. The garbage can with the lid near it I saw on the way home from the subway filled me with more sense of tragedy than some bronze blobs by some Japanese no-good-chy. Do you know the Japanese master I mean? He's internationally famous.

I kid modern art but to get back to language note that Goldsmith offers some suggestions about "parsing the new illegibility" and "the quicksand of the physicality of language" and, incidentally, on the insane vanity of the poet who wants to create a poem that "would still be on the planet earth when the sun explodes".

Finally, a quiz. Is "April 22 is nice day. I really like it" a deathless line of poetry? Expatiate. Go on to

really really happy all the models are dressed show the world what you can do ready to show the world wealy wealy happy....

Thomas J. Misa. *Leonardo to the Internet*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011. Pp. xxii, 378 with Index. \$25.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

If you did not see this book in its hardcover version (2004) here it is in paperback. It is an informed and incisive history of technology over half a millennium as technology grew out of and shaped The Renaissance, The Enlightenment, political and scientific and industrial revolutions, the Early Modern, Modern, and so-called Postmodern worlds. Only a couple of dozen pages or so in this survey of the beneficial and also dangerous gifts of technology (recently we have seen it threaten political stability as it facilitates threats to global security) have any specific matter on communication. The word *language* does not appear in this book's index. But the study does cover such matters of interest to geolinguists as globalization, which has profound effects upon and itself is affected by language. The Internet began with a military purpose, like the national interstate highway system, a network of roads, then the Internet became an academic communication network and now is a huge interpersonal connector and merchandise mart. It is undermining many communication systems such as newspaper publishing and book publishing and sales. At every stage technology has exerted an immense cultural, political, and economic effect. Linguists are especially interested in how it has changed our ways of thinking and expressing ourselves and how it has altered the degree to which and the way in which we socialize and interact with other individuals.

Kelly A. Gates. *Our Biometric Future*. New York: New York University Press, 2012. Pp.xii, 261 with Index. \$75.00 in hardcover, \$24.00 in paperback.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Assistant professorships are much harder to get these days than they were when this reviewer went after one. If Ms. Gates (of University of California at San Diego, where the academic ranking is really not quite at the top but good enough and the weather is superb) is any typical example the rank has to include extremely promising, indeed right now delivering, scholars and that on topics of serious importance and not, as *The Peter Principle* once said, mere experts on "the first five minutes of the Reformation".

Her topic is the technology of facial recognition. Her style is direct and often striking. She looks at the present and warns of the likely future of the culture of surveillance in a world politically more paranoid than ever. *Paranoid* may technically be the wrong word because (a) we have more dangerous enemies than ever and (b) those in the War on Terror have a better chance of actually hurting us badly than our enemies in the Cold War ever did. Society has always had to worry about surveillance, within and without, whether there were paternalistic powers who adopted the rule so familiar in families ("Find out what the children are up to and tell them to stop") or tyrannies that feared that upstarts would overthrow them just as they had overthrown their predecessors ("Watch out or they will start to reject the rules we put on them for their—that is our—own good"). Authorities in charge have always had to spy not only on other nations' activities but also on their own populations. They always sift what is said, censor what is written and read, and generally want to know what the public is up to, not only in representative democracies (where pols run things in the light of polls) but also in repressive dictatorships.

So technology is connected to geolinguistic concerns such as freedom of speech and censorship and other matters, traditional communications and developing technologies, even the present state of face recognition, though that technology and practice do not so far work very well. This pixilation of the personality's spread, and its limitations, we see now in (say) the US trying to identify terrorists in Afghanistan (see "The Eyes Have It" in *Economist* 7 July 2012, 40) or possible disturbers of the peace right here at home. All this is part of the giant surveillance problem and program for the (as I write) upcoming 2012 Olympics at more than 20 sites in Britain. It is part of the eyes in the sky world, of cameras in the streets and in public buildings. It is one of the many sometimes questionable approaches to present problems that are quite evident in daily homeland security and overseas adventures and widely commented upon in all the media, and affecting the media.

This book identifies facial recognition as an unreliable technology, one of the many that put a sort of band aid on truly serious wounds and, worse, not merely fails to deliver more security but contributes more and more to corporation domination and other controls over the citizenry. It promises less freedom all around in a world of Big Brother, and more destructive political polices, increased time wasting and money squandering by military and police and watchdog forces devoted to reading our faces our display devices in the cyberage. It threatens the adoption of ever more chancy devices rather than the making of ever more sound decisions about individual identity and responsibility and communication and interpersonal relations.

We need less stop-and-frisk and more stop-and-think, less fear of difference and more attention to the agents of equality, less reliance on machinery and automation and more on mind and more rational politics. Most of all we need a lot of improvement in whatever beliefs and actions that we are presently taking that are creating the opposition that is obvious in terrorists and any and all nay-sayers. We must not gain peace at the expense of our fundamental credos but we ought to be certain those are worth living by and dying for and that we are not simply defending the indefensible (which is what George Orwell called politics). Those of us who cherish liberty must remember the warning of Jefferson that the price is eternal vigilance and of Reagan that the destruction of freedom in the next little while is always a threatening possibility. With the speed of technology these days the next little while is hurtling toward us faster than ever before. Not only geolinguists are alarmed. Every free citizen should be.

Christopher Johnson. *Microstyle: The Art of Writing Little*. New York: W. W. Norton, 2012. Pp. 246 with Index. \$15.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Perhaps someone who blogs or tweets or twitters, etc., ought to review this witty and insightful book. Actually it could have been condensed and come out under 200 pages. I should talk! My latest book runs to some 230,000 words presented with the mantra from Thomas Mann "only the exhaustive is interesting". Still we can all learn to be concrete, concise, snappy, in tune with taciturn communication in a busy world. We do not absolutely have to dig below the surface of popular culture to seek deep meaning or significance if we do not want to do so.

That sentence many may say today is too long. With the argument for short sentences comes a rather nontraditional way of writing, and thinking. Also up-to-date is offering tools rather than rules for the modern world, except for the dictatorships who want to keep their citizens in line and the US that wants to impose our values and ways on the whole world, is increasingly anti-authoritarian. We not only tend to deal in brief messages but sometimes simply *send a signal*. We are—if you will—tentative. The use of style to convey a personality is going out of fashion. Gore Vidal used to say that style is just a matter of knowing what you want to say and saying and damn it all, but everyone agrees that in fact Vidal's work, especially the essays in which he most fully expresses exactly what he thinks, is highly polished. Vidal was a master of style. He really studied rhetoric. Americans generally believe rhetoric to be footwork by someone who lacks an effective punch. We even think that the ungrammatical or terse remark is more authentic. We are taking more, in briefer ways, but we are saying less, and less persuasively.

If you want a "microvoice," here is the place to get it. That is if you can spare the time to read more than 200 pages by the Name Inspector from the world of blog. This book does prove that "the official grammar that you find in textbooks and style guides morphs into the living grammar you see on the web and hear in conversation". That is worth learning.

What we really need today is what the late great James Thurber called "that fine precision in expository composition which comes only from long years of writing, rewriting, cutting down, and, most especially, throwing away." UagrE? Now, sit down and make that Thurber sentence shorter.

Geert Lovink. Networks Without a Cause: A Critique of Social Media. Malden (MA) &c.: Polity, 2011. Pp. 221, no Index, \$22.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The reference in the title is to *Rebel without a Cause*, a famous film, but the young people in that story did actually have a reason for existing and the young Internet and all modern media do too. This book abandons the old idea of Media Studies of the pre-dot.com crash. That approach was too broad. It was far too fuzzy and too old-fashioned because of the connections to literary criticism. The inventive and useful new media Master's degree at Amsterdam is in many ways different from the usual academic accreditation and the new scholarship is at once more pragmatic and more profound. It investigates innovative ways of examining what is actually going on in the cyberworld and it delves deeply into a wide variety of connections between technology and society, SPO (Single Person Organizations) and the wider world, language and interpretation and power, authority and revolution and responsibility, self-expression and privacy and personal rights, self-expression and activism in politics, language and control and overload, hackers and leaking and property, the reshaping of human ideas and ideals and work and commerce, secret keeping and whistle blowing, crowd sourcing and mob manipulation, friending and liking and human contact or the lack of facetime, copious texting and comment culture, diversion and the direction of society, the new weapons of war in WikiLeak and other contentions, and more. The far too long list (Americans say "laundry list") is deliberate. It tries to stress the point of how so much, and add,

please, hype and reality, is involved. The book's range is dazzling but the writing is focused and lucid. This work is extraordinarily important. This is a paperback that will often bring you up short and make you ponder long.

This is the fourth book by Geert Lovink (Amsterdam) on the social network and how it has radically altered many aspects of modern life. Not all of the recent advances in technology have come from the English-speaking nations but because this book is of international importance it is written in English.

Polity Press of Cambridge (UK) is distributed in the US by Wiley. Get it from them.

If you really want to join the game of scholarly legitimacy, you need to publish in English, an obligation that scientific publishing has long been aware of. Only then do you have any chance of becoming a registered in the English-centered economy of New discourse,

The book addresses the nature, operation, theory, and significance of the Web 2.0 era as is offers theory, case studies, penetrating analysis and wise judgment. Although it is in English it covers many countries in Europe and the Middle East and elsewhere because web sites, blogs, tweets, twitters, Facebook, Google, YouTube and so on have united the world in a whole new conversation that redefines who is in charge and what they have to say to those who rule and those who are ruled.

This professor of media history and theory at the European Graduate School has a vital message for geolinguists and all other sociolinguists. Fortunately, however much he knows, he knows how to write engagingly as well as informatively. Don't fail to read his work carefully and be sure to take it seriously.

The social media are remaking society and the software and hardware, freeware and malware, are dramatically changing our wetware (brains) and if I may coin a new word speakware (language).

Julie Coleman. *The Life of Slang*. New York &c.: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 354 with Index. \$27.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

This book is a doozy. The slang word comes from the luxury Duesenberg motorcar of the first half of the last century. It stresses the vitality of slang, its inventiveness. Everything linguistic starts with neologism and the desire for novelty. Some words and constructions become standard. Some do not and the rest is considered slang or slangy. Sometimes new words are constructed along familiar lines, sometimes not. I can coin *slangologist* and *doof*. Sometimes certain words and expressions are actually in common use but are considered by purists to be too informal, too vulgar, and some expressions such as *end* of the day and bottom line are so often heard that one can get to hate them. Still the public continues to use them and there is not much that can be done about it any more than we can stop the stupid or pompous from saying at this particular point in time instead of now. The people make the rules every day. They build the language and what they habitually speak is the parole, the language in action. The language in action is the subject of geolinguistic attention, you know.

Ms. Coleman (Leicester) is an expert on invented languages (*From Elvish to Klingon*) and slang as one of the great creations of popular culture (*Slang: The People's Poetry*). Here she gives us a lively and meticulously documented history of the evolution of slang and the arguments over whether it is substandard or not. She also delves into meaning and thought, how we know what we know, why we say "let me see what I say to see what I mean," and other problems. There is a lot in this book about consciousness and cognition, intuition and intelligence, less about the increasing informality of communication in the modern world where literacy has spread to everyday folks and no longer is the sole province of elite clerics, where technology has increased amazingly the ability of even those who cannot or do not read and write to hear

and respond to the messages from others, even others who write long sentences. With the Morse code one had to be able to send and to read that. With the telephone one only had to pick up the receiver and listen and speak. Now that we can have telephone messages that can go on as long as we like at no extra cost, or as long with some devices as we wish to use up our paid-for minutes. We can beverbose. In fact we usually phone briefly but very often. Or we write in 140 characters and send without revision. We use more abbreviations. We use more slang than ever.

There is a certain number of terms which Ms. Coleman says are slang such as *brig* ("military or naval prison") which one might say are not. You may now tweet and twitter and blog about them to your heart's content. You can argue about dialect differences and spelling variations and what is standard or substandard, what is slabg or conventional English, what is proper and what is improper (however you define those terms). You can say what you like about so-called high culture and everyday culture ("low" in what sense?). But Ms. Coleman posits that it is in popular culture and even ephemera that one can learn the most about people communicating.

Ray Jackendorf. *A User's Guide to Thought and Meaning*. New York &c.: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. x, 274 with Index. \$28.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Writing in a relaxed style "accessible to anyone curious about thought and meaning" and giving the reader the gist of 30 years of study in the field, Jackendorf, a professor of philosophy and cognitive studies at Tufts, starts with "what's a language?" and "what's a word?" He proceeds to discuss the issues involved, including the fact that words do not always mean just one thing exactly in the rough and tumble of human communication. Meanings are both unconscious and conscious. They vary between individuals and over time. They are "not cut and dried". Then things get trickier as we face observation and interpretation and "modalities of spatial perception" and take into account our feelings that color things in the world we see and feel and converse about. How do we get to the truth of our world? How do we discuss that rationally—and "how much rational thinking do we actually do?"

We are shown "rational thinking as a craft". Jackendorf shows how it relates to everyday life and arts and sciences, and, especially useful to geolinguists, warns about having to live with "multiple perspectives". We all like to think in terms of simple causes and simple effects. Mother Nature, however, does not work like that even at the basic level because, despite what the average person thinks, genes work in combinations and with enhancers and governors and blockers, so even DNA is a lot more complicated than you think. Cognition and language are also extremely complex. Who'd a thunk it?

Jackendorf fully appreciates complexity. He can deal with it. He concludes that perception, thought, and language have to cope with the fact that the way our brains work means that the greater part of all those activities are not conscious and that rational conscious thought owes much to unconscious intuition. Science is discovering that we are not nearly in control as much as we imagine we are. Free will is one of the latest casualties of mind science. What that will do to religion when people start thinking seriously no one can predict. I predict the general population will never undertake to think that seriously. Meanwhile, language and intuition cooperate mysteriously to produce what we call reality and rationality., Each one of those is a strange product.

James Hammond Trumbull. *Natick Dictionary: A New England Indian Lexicon*. Lincoln (NE): University of Nebraska Press, 2009 Pp. xxxviii, 347. \$30.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

James Hammond Trumbull (1821—1897) of Connecticut was of a busy generation of historians of early America who took an intense interest in the philological work of the missionaries. Intrepid missionaries went among the aborigines in colonial times, learned their languages and created dictionaries and grammars. They translated the Word of God into those languages to bring the heathen to the light. Trumbull never quite completed his work but it was published by the government agencies concerned with anthropology and ethnology around the turn of the twentieth century and now it appears in a paperback edited by Robert D. Madison (formerly of US Naval Academy) & Karen Lentz Madison (Arkansas as Fayetteville) with the old forward by Edward Everett Hale, who states that "Trumbull's vocabularies constitute the most important contribution to the scientific study of [John] Eliot's Indian [translation of the] Bible which has been made since that wonderful book was published".

Geolinguists may not generally notice such specialized and historical works but these old studies should encourage us to study current languages which need to be recorded and, with their cultures, preserved in this kind of form, with lexicons of Strange-English and English-Strange. For some languages we may, as the missionaries did, gave to invent alphabets. The technical term for this is graphization. This book has only now come to *Geolinguistics*' attention but is mentioned now because of the book that follows.

Paleo Innes, Linda Alexander & Bertha Tilkins. *Intermediate Creek/Mvskoke Emponvkv Hokkolat*. Norman (OK): University of Oklahoma Press, 2009. Pp. xx, 327 with Index. \$29.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Here is an example of a textbook for the modern study of aboriginal Amerindian language. These authors in 2004 produced a beginner's text for learning the Muskogee or Creek language and this is the text that follows up, carefully tailored to the more advanced student who wants to know more about plural nouns with subjective verbs and indirect objects, the future tense and intentive mood,, commands and causatives, locatives (of special interest to students of place names), sentences with multiple clauses, discursive structures, etc., and who can learn from folk tales as well as grammars. There are Mvskoke-English and English-Mvskoke glossaries provided,. The language has been taught, among other places, at the University of Oklahoma. Americans of this heritage have been glad to preserve and use it. This is the pioneering advanced textbook of Creek. There is an essay on Muskogee and Seminole life and custom. There is a CD so you can hear the language spoken. More books on language ought to have CDs attached. Samples of all spoken languages of which we have recordings ought to be put online with translations in a few large languages of international use.

Thus far no scholar has produced a detailed survey of the teaching of various Amerindian languages now that the government has abandoned its determination to make the Amerindian-Americans speak English only. Certain Amerindian nations have proudly made efforts to teach their languages, and with that their heritage, to the young. For a while the official US government policy was strongly to discourage this. Having taken most of their lands the US still has not managed to destroy all native cultures. Of several hundred Amerindian languages more than half have disappeared but some are being vigorous preserved although there are, for instance, very few speakers of the various Salish languages—these include in Canada the Bella Coola, Comox, Halkomelen, Okanagon, Shuswap, and Thompson and in the US Shalishan and also Bella Coola and Flathead,-Kalispel-- which make up two-thirds of the 30 native languages that have no relation to any others. Particularly interesting isolates are the Haida and thee Tlingit of British Columbia and Alaska. (Some Tlingit in The Yukon as well.) Chinook and Trader Navaho are

interesting languages used by early traders but these like a language employed in early New Jersey by whites contacting the aborigines have outlived their usefulness.

We used to say that Choctaw was incomprehensible, the way that the French call incomprehensible language *Chinois*. Which languages are supposedly incomprehensible or harder to learn or more difficult to speak is not something than can be very profitably discussed by most people. Some of the Amerindian languages can look very structurally odd to us but, with in English the article *the* sometimes functioning as an adverb who are we to talk? Even *very* is an adverb.

Guesses at how many Amerindian languages have been lost are unreliable and sometimes the estimates of current speakers that he gives may be open to question but Erick V. Gunnemark lists 16 Amerindian languages spoken in both the US and Canada, 34 spoken in the US only and 25 spoken in Canada only. Joseph Greenberg (Stanford) sought to derive all Amerindian languages of North America from just three roots (Aleut-Eskimo, Amerind, and Na-Dene) but other scholars have scoffed at this and some have found isolates that question all classification. Gunnemark quotes the *Canadian Encyclopedia* on the difficulty of establishing Amerindian language families and says that Michael K. Forster had described scholarly efforts as "flawed by error, lack of evidence and misplaced optimism".

Most American linguists, indeed most linguists anywhere, know very little of the American Indian languages (if you want to call them that). Those languages have many interesting features. For example, one instead of using a question mark at the end of an interrogatory sentence employs a word meaning question, not a mark of punctuation. One might think that oddities if nothing else would attract linguists. Cardinal Mezzofani, one of the greatest polyglots of history knew, according to his great admirer Charles William Russell, among all his perhaps 70 languages—Russell credited him with actually mastering 30 and being somewhat familiar with more--could manage only a few conversational bits of Chippewa and Delaware, just as he had only scraps of Gaelic and Irish, having been attracted to them by their sounds. Of about 300 or more known native languages of North America somewhat fewer than 200 remain and many of those will probably soon disappear. Already many extant languages have few speakers, fewer than 50 native languages are being taught to the children in North America, and there are probably fewer than 50 experts to study them all except perhaps for the Algonkian family of languages. Some of the languages do not even bear their correct original names. : Navaho is from the Spanish, .Cree is a sort of méti French version of an aboriginal word, and Chippewa is usually called Ojibwa or Ojibwe when its name in its own language is Anishinaabemowin, an example of the habit of running words together, a feature which made English and other European speakers think they could never understand such talk. Most of all, Europeans did not much care to bother with native North American languages. They thought the cultures that spoke them or as in Kickapoo whistled them were savage.

Heather Graves & Roger Graves. *A Strategic Guide to Technical Communication*. Peterborough (Ontario): Broadview Press, 2012. Pp. 327 with Index. \$52.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

College textbooks are high priced these days but this one, in paperback and in an improved second edition, expands on ethics and all aspects of technical prose with clear text and apt illustrations. For anyone interested in communication in technology and business this text provides an authoritative overview. Geolinguists might well read it through to add to their more familiar understanding of interpersonal exchanges in speech and ordinary writing. As a textbook, if scholars wish to make use of it, there is a dedicated web site with power-point outlines for instructors, lesson plans, and sample student work. There is in this book instruction useful for presentations at conferences, the preparation of slides, etc.

What the authors do not discuss and some book(s) should take up in sociological and cultural detail is the fact that users of new communication devices are themselves chiefly new. Take for instance the fact that teenagers 15 to 17 in 2012 are texting an average of 60 times a day. That is up from about 50 times a day three years ago. Teenagers may not have seen anything strange in the campy comedy *Meet the*

Spartans in which there is a lot of talking on cell phones. Teenagers know practically nothing of BC and maybe very little about BBW (Before Bottled Water).

People who use cell phones are usually much younger than those who do not. People who go on Apple are wealthier than people who use Windows to buy online and are liable to be gamed to pay more for any product. The Internet is putting many businesses from newspapers and bookstores out of business and it is sorting the young from the old goats. Only the elderly rely much on the US postal service. Others call it snail mail and avoid it, and not only because it is slower but also less efficient, ever more costly, and cutting back on services because it is losing them of billions of dollars each year. Our whole world is developing not only an ever wider gap between rich and poor but a disturbing chasm between young and old is at least equally threatening. Everything from politics to health care is going to become very different when the retired aged (we say aging) get to be a really heavy burden on the young who are still working (if they can find jobs). Over the hill and far away from the mainstream.... Meanwhile even the broke are buying. In the second quarter of 2012 there were 35 million iPhones sold and soon there will be an new, improved iPhone on the market. If you do not have the latest device or the latest sneakers—and electronics and sneakers now can cost over \$300—you are, my friend, more or less out of it. You may even use landlines. OMG!

The wired world, communication via electricity going much farther than Morse code cables of his time, was predicted by Jules Verne in his novel *Paris in the Twentieth Century*,. That was written in 1863 and "too pessimistic" to be published until 1996. Actually Verne lived into that century; he died in 1905. He envisioned something like the Internet of the time before The Cloud and wirelessness. On Vene's prescient, despairing fiction materialism and terrible weapons of mass destruction appear, worse than the huge cannons firing shells of poison gas in his novel about the Prussian defeat of the French in 1870. In that book by Verne the last classical scholar dies destitute in the snow of an uncaring, technologically advanced and morally bankrupt, horrific world.

Computer experts and neurobiologists are right now investigating the possibility of defeating the death of the individual mind. Maybe the information in the trillions of connections in a human brain can be downloaded into Is and θs and put into computers. Then into robot bodies. Scientists are going to try. There's communication for you! The dead communicating with the future, information immortality!

I wish some of the many widely read aficionados of science fiction would search the available texts and give us books about the forecasts in imaginative fiction of the technologies of the present and foreseeable future especially in terms of linguistic arts and sciences. Those books might energize the young as well as inform the old.

Richard W. Bailey. *Speaking American*. New York &c.: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. xviii, 207. \$27.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Far too many Americans may be crazy enough to believe that the dead can communicate to us in séances or through TV psychics but the dead now actually communicate in books. Here is a welcome example. The late Richard W. Bailey was once president of the American Dialect Society and of the Dictionary Society of America. He was a longtime friend of Allen Walker Read, well known to readers of *Geolinguistics*, and Bailey supplied the bibliography to Read's book on American placenames that this reviewer edited for publication by Edwin Mellen Press. Bailey brought to this present book under review a similar dedication to helping and loads of experience as author of *Images of English* (a history of 19th-century English) and years of distinguished classroom experience at the University of Michigan. The result in this case is a breezy history of the American language. It stretches from early times to modern urban slang with a sometimes very amusing look at those who wanted to regularize American and those who persisted in speaking in all sorts of dialects both educated and not. The combination of serious scholarship

and amusing asides on the more entertaining aspects of language "as she is spoke" by city slickers and rural hicks, by professors and gang members, etc., is utterly captivating.

The book is organized around cultural centers in half-century periods: Chesapeake Bay 1600 – 1650, Boston 1650 – 1700, Charleston 1700 – 1750, Philadelphia 1750 – 1800, New Orleans 1800 – 1850, New York 1850 – 1900, Chicago 1900 – 1950, Los Angeles 1950 – 2000, and Cyberspace 2000 – the present. I never realized before how important NOLA (New Orleans, Louisiana) was to the language. Much as I have delighted in the dialect there now and hear in it, oddly, something rather akin to what the famous Brooklyn accent (now seldom heard). Geolinguists will be chiefly interested of course in the modern period but their understanding of that will be greatly enhanced by the coverage of the earlier times in which the vibrant, an old word was *catawampous*, American language was altered by the speakers and writers of it. All the writers, of serious literature, yellow journalism, slapstick comedy, tragedy, all sorts.

In the quotations the voices of the distant past and the recent past are distinctly heard. It is speaking freely, as the title of a book by Stuart Berg Flexner had it. Where Flexner was a lexicographer and made books chiefly by creating prose to list examples of interest, Bailey was a linguist of a wider sort and had a great interest in social history as well as words. Bailey's book is the Old Bailey, and just. Flexner's book was basically just Flexner, a true collector and sincere lover of words. There needed to be an updating and expansion of Flexner but there was a copyright. So the holder of rights had to be placated and the public was still to be offered a book called Flexner's and indeed largely Flexner's text but the rest was a kind of ventriloquism as myself and quite a number of others provided material attributed to Flexner's new editor, a lady who largely "went over" our contributions and put her name on the book.. We produced "work for hire" and sold all our rights. We received no royalties and that was OK but it is sad that Bailey did not live to collect royalties on *Speaking American*, all his own. Or so I think.

It is not the American desire to make a buck but another aspect of the rambunctious American character that is seen on every page of Bailey's highly original book. He is first and foremost a teacher, an explainer, and he puts the emphasis on everyday speech and Americans' impatience with rules. An American inclination to individuality is clear, even when it comes to Vietnamese-American and Chicano-American and the now more or less defunct Brooklyn speech and Valley Girl speech. A new kind of linguistics professor was seen in Bailey as he kept up with the latest language changes. We learn a lot from him about dry-as-dust grammarians dying off and the flourishing of the workaday American's inventiveness and all the *ingrammaticisms*, to use a word from Artemus Ward, that the public used. Ward was one of the leading 19th-century American humorists who battened on odd spelling and strange constructions and semi-literate spellings, reaching for laughs. In print and on the vaudeville stage, etc., making fun of Jewish and Irish and German and other immigrant speech was a stock in trade and political correctness be damned.

Now it is harder to get away with snide comment on substandard—if there is indeed a standard—in American speech and writing. The new obscenity is anti-ethnic speech. As always, there are howls from certain traditional seats of power and commentator quarters that the language even if hate speech is suppressed is still is going to Hell in a handcart. Yes, it is true that in New York and in Florida and many other states the language competency of the young is so low that there has been vigorous opposition to standard tests in the schools. There has been cheating and the cooking of statistics and the inevitable revelations that muckraking, an important US indoor sport, practically guarantees will occur. There are denunciations of all tests as discriminatory (a bad word). There is warning that new testing will not only cost a lot but lead to even more cheating. Everyone boldly says or secretly admits that the students are doing very poorly with reading and writing and, for that matter (some say) morality. It seems likely that opposition to documenting that will be highly resented. But society cannot progress well with illiterates.

So nevertheless changes will come. As for what changes will be wrought in the increasingly multicultural/multiculti American of the future, Bailey sagely concludes that we can only wait and see, not prognosticate. This reviewer will go out on a limb only so far as to say that it seems to him likely that grammar will simplify, more non-English words will be taken into American, that the Internet and communicating on new devices will impact (a new verb from a noun) our language even as technology spreads American wider and wider, around the where it is changed by all who use it, native speakers or the

majority of speakers. I also expect that spelling will to some extent naturalize speakers of American in an overall tendency to make American spelling become more utilitarian and to move a tad closer to American pronunciation (which will remain largely a matter of personal conscience and local habits). One powerful factor is the media, especially TV and the movies but surely they are going to reflect diversity, not impose conformity, because they are moneymakers not educators. Realism has forced the movies, for instance, to hire dialogue coaches to make actors sound not more "correct" (rather British) but to get regional accents right. In Sweden and the Sudan and Switzerland, etc., people are picking up something of the dialects of the Jersey Shore and Baltimore and Southern California, etc., not to mention lazy lout lowspeak, not to mention the unmentionable (but outspoken) vulgarity of rap. It's all American speech.

Meanwhile in American speech there are grammatical errors even in the State of the Union address that professional writers make up for the president to read. Because he is a good teleprompter reader he has become a respected orator but his true secret is his charisma and a personality that seems to express a sincerity, a sincerity which the word *orator* absolutely lacks. Lesser public figures may not know that *none* takes a singular verb and *data* is plural, or they may be practical rather than ignorant and realize they must speak to their public in the words the public understands and expects. I once was invited to give a talk in a lecture series in Texas and met the governor. I confess I was truly amazed how educated he sounded. I had heard him speak previously only in good-ol'—boy stump-speech English at a campaign stop.

Educationally, he was not all hat and no cattle. I admit he was not up in extraordinariness to a governor of Texas of well before our time. Let me just tell you of that genial genius, who won hearts and minds with country music and homespun harangues. He was so loved that when he could not run for another term Texans elected his wife. It is reported that on one occasion, after his talk, a person in the crowd, obviously a political opponent who wanted really to stump him, asked him the dangerous question, "Do you approve of teaching Spanish in the public schools?" Whichever way the candidate answered that one, he would be in trouble. What he was inspired to reply was this: "I have read the Good Book and if English was good enough for Jesus Christ it's good enough for me!" Then the band struck up and off he went to thunderous applause. Don't let anyone tell you Americans cannot be brilliant with the language, even in politics.

True, our great writers of literature and our great masters of the spoken word are comparatively few among our several hundred million souls but a large proportion of even the unwashed are not untalented in language creation and colorful use although many of our college graduates cannot straighten out *lay* and *lie*, and a large sector of the general population bangs out clumsy and trivial messages and hits SEND, no revision, no remorse. As for logic and (say) the undistributed middle, the American's undistributed middle is the fat belly on a large proportion of the grossly obese.

Julian Cranberry. *The Calusa: Linguistic and Cultural Origins and Relationships*. Tuscaloosa (AL): University of Alabama Press, 2011. Pp. xviii, 86 with Index. \$30.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

You may never have heard of the Amerinds named Calusa. They are thought to be connected to other southern Florida tribes such as the Tunica of Mississippi and perhaps the Chitimacha and the Timucua north of the Calusa. You probably have seen the placename *Tuscaloosa* (in the study of the place names of Florida by E. Wallace McMullen or others writing of Florida or the coast of Georgia) and you may have wondered what that odd-sounding Amerindian name meant.

In this brief study, at a price that reflects a necessarily small readership for a specialized paperback but one of important archeological, anthropological, general cultural and specific linguistic significance, the language coordinator for Native American languages in Florida, a long-tome scholar of "the *total* known corpus of surviving Calusa language data" and a strict follower of his eminent teacher Franz Boas in paying attention to "any human activity and society" gives us the known pieces carefully put together.

The Calusa are extinct but the study nonetheless can be useful to geolinguists, do we mention it here as evidence of continuing programs of investigation, and problems, relating to native American peoples. Geolinguists who deal in languages in action in the present must never ignore the past and can take warning against coming up, without sufficient evidence, with easy answers to questions of language families (such as Gulf Coast). We seek to connect languages and peoples nut we must avoid positing connections between languages, living and dead, which really do not exist. In our striving for cohesion we may fake comprehension. That is to be avoided. Isolate languages must be taken into account just as seriously as those which fit neatly together. Pre-historic conditions which isolated cultures and their languages must be recognized. We like to see cultures in contact and conflict but the Calusa cannot be proved to have come to Florida from Mexico or indeed any other certain source nor to have interacted with tribes of what are Mississippi, Georgia, not even the Chitimacha of Louisiana who are attempting to revive their native language and culture but speak only Louisiana English and are in Cranberry's words "as Anglo-American as any other group of people in America".

What we know of the Calusa language as spoken at the time of the *conquista* comes from a Spanish *hidalgo* named Hernando de Escalante Fontaneda who, shipwrecked, was captured by the Calusa and from the ages of 13 to 30 lived among a people in the area for perhaps 1000 years and first noted by the Spanish in 1513 when Ponce de Léon touched in their area but for decades thereafter suspicious of the Spanish and unfriendly in Florida, named by and "founded" by Pedro Menéndez de Avilés. Esquelante (sometimes Descalente in Spanish records) learned the Calusa language, and wrote about it in a "self-serving" memoir in Spanish, translated by Buckingham Smith, *Memoir of Do*[n] *de Escalente Fontaneda Respecting Florida. Written in Spain about the Year 1575* (1944).

This meticulous if brief study by Cranberry offers arguments about the source of the Calusa language, its nature and comparison with other aboriginal languages (it is unrelated to Apalachee, Muskogean, Seminole, or Timucua, though speakers of Calusa and speakers of Tunica appear to have traded), Calusa life and Calusa migration.

Markus Bieswanger, Heiko Motschenbacher & Susanne Mühleisen, eds. *Language in Its Socio-Cultural Context*. New York &c.: Peter Lang, 2010. Pp. 253 witb Index. \$70.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

It is regrettable that this paperback should about "New Explorations in Gendered, Global and Media Uses" should cost so much because the interaction of language and society in the larger picture is what geolinguistics is all about and many geolinguists will never read this dozen of essays edited by experts at three German universities (respectively Flensburg, Frankfurt am Main, and Bayreuth). There is important information here regarding the connections between sociolinguistics and anthropology, language change, and comparative linguistics, with the newly popular emphases on the likes of gender issues, language and cognition, implications for language teaching, language rights, variation in creoles, etc., as individuals live and interact in what Labov called communities with "shared norms". The extent to which norms are indeed shared these days is much in question and while there are as there always have been a plethora of regional and social dialects and a babel of languages to them has been added what I call the Geek and Latent new languages of technological advance. Many elderly people cannot manage the new devices, or will not learn, and cannot understand the chatter of either the jargon-laden professionals or the careless expression of the young. Something very radical has rather suddenly happened to society, something more impressive and more significant than ordinary change, something that is turning the old world upside down in a way that surpasses the invention of the printing press. A few scholars are trying to sort things out and talk theory.

The introduction makes some pretty obvious statements ("Language does not exist in isolation, but is always connected to the cultural and social context or contexts in which it is used") but the good is in the details of those who look closely at classrooms and other sites of discourse. Here the essays are full of scholarly findings, whether about, for instance, the details of decisions made or the distancing in creoles

from standard speech. Specialists will have to seek the book out and read up on their areas of interest and in fact start to formulate their own explanations of the new communication situation in which "one mind affects another" by one means or another.

Mark Balnaves & Michele Willson. A New Theory of Information & The Internet. New York &c.: Peter Lang, 2011. Pp. viii, 200 with Index. \$34.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Balnaves & Willson, both of Curtin University, are two of the scholars who try to make sense of the Big Picture of today. This paperback is about how the protocol and the public sphere interact. It tries to tackle what information really is, an ordering, a reduction of uncertainty, a commodity, a resource, a code, a disclosure, cognitions and intentions, or adequate indication. It tries to relate the information society to society and the creation and distribution of information. It is less expensive and of more general interest than the book just mentioned because here the speech community is the popular Internet with all the freedoms and restraints—A. R. Galloway has noticed that the Internet is the most controlled medium every known—that are so much discussed daily that the medium involves. Moreover the story is the familiar one of a giant leap forward in information gathering, processing, and delivery. This book is all about this wondrous new medium and network sociality. All that is discussed by two experts who insist that (italics theirs) "information does not exist, only informed people exist". They note all the democratic forums and personal networks and all the rest of the new cyberworld and its marvelous new servants—and masters operating in the public sphere and changing the way most people live and indeed the way most people think. Whether what Habermas sees as a "unilineal development from a politically active public to one withdrawn into a bad privacy," and whatever the new dispensation is doing to established ideas of personal privacy themselves overthrown, millions upon millions hunched over their delightful and possibly dangerous devices, are going to make the world more peaceful and prosperous and person friendly, or maybe not. Certainly a new era of haves and have nots is being created in terms of access to information. Certainly new ways of communicating are reshaping language SU cn C. Certainly the machines are changing some part of what it traditionally has been the way of humans in contact and competition. Certainly more people are reaching out more, blogging. Tweeting, texting, and so on, chattering more to others Out There and at the same time spending more time than ever before tied to machines. They are communicating more and more at a distance and therefore with only emoticons rather than tones of voice and facial expressions and gestures and so they are beginning to get closer and closer to being indistinguishable from robots just as science has reached the point where it is difficult and sometimes impossible to determine if a robot is "talking" to us onscreen or a human being is at the other end of the line of communication.

These and other modern situations demand a serious attempt at a whole new theory of communication. This book makes a move in that direction but by no means is The Answer. It raises as many questions as it settles, probably more. The speed with which technology is moving, in fact, blurs everything. Future things seem harder than ever to predict, in a phrase one hears all too often these days, "down the road". Another all too common phrase is the "you know" that occurs in every other sentence we hear these days in the US, or so it seems, as annoying as all the *and ahs* and *but ahs* and initial *wells* we hear when people increasingly unaccustomed to speaking face to face are called upon to be articulate. But we do not know, not as much as we used to think we did know, about communication. And we do not know what vast changes in language the new means of communicating are going to make in time to come. It's like, y'know, sort of one of those known unknowns, y'know what I'm sayin'?

Jeff Rice. Digital Detroit. Carbondale (IL): Southern Illinois University Press, 2012. Pp. xiv, 247 with Index. \$39.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The unusual and unusually expensive paperback by a professor of digital media at the University of Kentucky deals with the most horizontal major US city—while most like New York City can be said to be vertical—and the relatively static boundaries in which the old city of Detroit has gone into disastrous decline. Detroit's downtown has, incredibly, seen huge tracts with buildings cleared for what are now small farms and great swathes of the rest of this formerly extremely important industrial city have been abandoned or lie in decay and are badly served with police and other services. We have Kristin Palm's definition of modern Detroit as "Ruins of a Golden Age". The history of Detroit is extraordinary. It is being constantly rewritten in the light of financial collapse by a population whom Rice studies in terms of what we call might rumble in the rubble, communications, rhetoric as he terms it, for the book's subtitle is "Rhetoric and Space in the Age of the Network". This is "a mapping of Detroit as a network".

Admitting that "networks are messy, confusing spaces where information, people, things, places, and ideas are coming together and drifting apart," Rice writes a network, indeed rather a surreal world, with "references, allusions, quotations, and connections that may throw some readers off". This book actually offers a startling new way of communicating information and commenting upon it subjectively, evaluating facts as locations such as Woodward Avenue (Detroit's main thoroughfare), the Macabees Building (built in 1927, now the home of the English Department of Wayne State University), Michi9gan Central Train Station ("blatant in its emptiness" now), and 8 Mile ("a pivotal point within ...southeastern Michigan's scheme for east-west roads"). He makes a good deal of reference to pop music and movies and other popular culture, although the readership will probably be academics more or less unfamiliar with his references. That introduces another aspect of communication worth consideration, for likely readers are more familiar with *topoi* than *MC5*, Barthes and McLuhan and Fr. Ong and maybe Burroughs than teen cool and urban blight.

Social networking and blogging, tweeting, friending, and all the rest are changing the way we think and express ourselves and the way we relate to others, now with less face time and with some loss of former emotional connection, and write about and to others.

This book is really not, as most books about digitization are, about the Internet. Just as well. Elaine Glaser in *Get Real: How to Tell It Like It Is in a World of Illusions* (2012) has written that "any sentence beginning with 'The Internet is...' that is not a strict engineering description is bound to be false" but in these reviews we must take notice of at least a few of the innumerable books on the Internet if we are at all interested in modern communication and its effects upon language and society. We must take heed of both those books that denounce it and those that praise it to the skies—or the cloud. The Internet like the current fiscal crises produced revolution. Of course we must recall that some time back Chou En-lai when someone spoke to him about the final effects of the French Revolution expressed the opinion that it was too soon—indeed it is still too soon—to say what the full effect of the French revolution has been, except for a couple of monarchies and five republics thus far. The past is not over yet, neither the distant nor the recent past. What will happen to France, or the US, or the city of Detroit, or languages as we know them no one can say. We live and learn, wait and see.

Meanwhile the US has five million empty houses and thousands upon thousands of Veterans of wars in Afghanistan and Iraq homeless, among many others with only public shelters or no shelter at all.

Chambers Dictionary. London: Chambers, 2012. Pp. 1920. \$50.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The popular, hefty, one-volume *Chambers Dictionary* is now available in a 12th edition and carries on its tradition of including all the "hard words," the sort of words that most people look up in dictionaries, the words for which they want the meanings rather than the origins or histories or illustrations. It may not have very recent neologisms from computerese such as *link rot* but it does include a number of new words from the military such as *mission cree*p (the task growing bigger than was intended) and from the world of what the Germans call the equivalent of "warm brothers" (two men who have a buddy romance called a *bromance*).

Chambers is excellent for the reader of logophile writers such as Anthony Burgess who hit one continually with unfamiliar words. It includes a lot of literary and also slang and dead or moribund words and American as well as British English. It distinguishes between US and UK meanings for words such as homely.

David Skinner. *The Story of Ain't: America, Its Language and the Most Controversial Dictionary Ever Published.* New York: HarperCollins, 2012. Pp. 386. \$26.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Skinner ain't misbehavin', just a little disorganized, and this work is rather badly titled. True, ain't long was denounced in certain circles, as was *irregardless* in its day and hopefully when misused more recently, but ain't ain't exclusively US. It was earlier used in the UK. In fact the subtitle tells us what the book truly is about, which is a pretty much forgotten kerfuffle years ago over Webster's Third (W3). Skinner claims that W3 was "the most controversial dictionary ever published" but in fact every dictionary brings surprises and there are always fogeys who are offended and progressive types who believe (fill in the blank) ought not to have been omitted.

W3 was debated as being more "permissive" but by the time it appeared dictionaries were no longer dictating from on high and no dictionary was in any position to permit or refrain from permitting; dictionaries were not to legislate but to report. What they recorded if any permission was involved was what the society of the time, and the market for dictionaries, permitted. The world was ready for ain't and indeed had been for a long time. The obscenities and vulgarities were far more debatable than ain't. Dr. Johnson famously described fellow lexicographers as "harmless drudges" and the compilers of W3 in typical lexicographers' style, were really not so much pushing the envelope (as we say today) as catching up with the times and trying (not without some restraints, of course) to describe the spoken language, which itself bespoke an escape from certain old authorities and standards.

Ain't that the truth! If people were saying and writing *irregardless* then it was the duty of Philip Gove and his colleagues to say so in *W3*—and add, if they wished, the fact that in some circles the use of *ain't* caused a lifted eyebrow or a snobbish sneer. But dictionaries do not mark words Pompous or Camp or Old-Fashioned or Don't Go There, etc., and so how to annotate words is—is this word in *W3*?—*iffy*.

Dictionaries, relying on printed citations and those from a limited array of publications, never capture the whole language. Maybe now that the Oxford English Dictionary is online it can quickly pick up new coinages and it certainly is rich these days in Americanisms and even a certain amount of vulgarity but most of us word collectors know more "dirty words" and slang than the OED fesses up to (to end with not one preposition but two). For a very long time even very large dictionaries left out the four-letter words, a stupid term because some of the most common in all senses of common have more than four letters. They are sometimes more fun to say. Even if one is too prim to indulge in them one may enjoy others using

them. An ecclesiastical uncle of mine when missing a put on the golf course was reported to have said, "Would someone please say something appropriate?"

Preferably a string of *expletives* or at least some powerful polysyllables. Even in vulgarity Americans love long words. It is a mark of poor education. Eventually an American lexicographer devoted a whole book to the terse f-word and its various versions and uses but it was a long time before f---appeared in US dictionaries. I found it in an obscure UK dictionary of the late eighteenth century but without any indication of its use in the US as an everyday, all-purpose intensifier or the senses such as mistreat, cheat, etc.

Dictionary compiling is a business. Dictionaries are never official, maybe replete but never complete. Publishers have to keep an eye on what potential buyers will expect, or tolerate. Of course they seldom get that exactly right. Norman Mailer's evasive *fug* ought also to be in dictionaries although today it is practically *obs*. Does your dictionary have the verb *jill off*? Maybe lexicographers haven't been listening to lesbians lately.

Maybe you never have heard of the male version, *jack off*, either. *No problema*. You probably have not heard much of *ain't* lately. Ain't that too bad? What it brings up for geolinguists might well be the fact of class distinctions in spoken and written language, certain words and expressions contributing to sodality and identity, and what we might call levels of politeness as opposed to levels of society. In the UK if you are a duke you can say *ain't* and drop final gs as much as you like; you can act and dress and speak as you please. Everyone else, everyone who is not at the top, even the Royals who are expected to be prim and bourgeois in Britain (Brenda and Bruce is the slang monikers for the queen and her consort), but the dukes *have it made*. All the rest have to worry about the rungs on the ladder and believe they must take into account public opinion.

My personal machinery for distinguishing between intellectual sheep and goats in the US detects whether people use words they cannot pronounce or spell, follow too many fads (especially the ones for redundant words as in *future planning*, *game plan*, and *laundry list*), say (for instance) *salt and pepper hair* instead of *gray hair* or *oro-choice* instead of *ro-abortion*, and indulge in dishonest evasions (*differently abled* instead of *handicapped*, *revenue enhancement* instead of *higher taxes*, and *peacekeeping* instead of war against wrongheaded people it is our godgiven right as a super power to bully into doing things our damn way). I also happen to deplore *down the road*, *the fact of the matter is*, and *at this particular point in time* instead of *now*. The dangling participle still bothers me but the split infinitive, writing with comma splices, no. Starting too often with *and* and writing sentence fragments and ending with a preposition—these things I have had to get used to. You?

If the use of *ain't* were in fact a word exclusively used by the ignorant, it would be unwise ever to use it, but as Tweedledee says in Lewis Carroll, "as it isn't, it ain't".

Finally, Americans particularly like to slum sometimes in speech and enjoy using some silly faddish and purportedly low language or even ungrammatical construction in order to sound more with-it and to avoid the reputation of being too stuffy. Thus somehow "Aren't we enjoying ourselves?" lacks a certain real American flavor found in "Ain't we got fun?" "What is this for?" sounds right, while often going to a lot of trouble to avoid ending with a preposition ending with a preposition ("Why did you bring that book up to be read out of at me for?") is "arrant nonsense up with which I will not put". Our nation founded in revolution still has a lot of joyous lawbreakers. Thus Americans will battle for their right to freedom of speech and lately there has been a damnable increase in groups of people who go well beyond trying to ban ain't and are quick to tell you that you cannot say this or that or use this or that word. It's unacceptable! To them, OK, but you have to have a firm grip on what is acceptable to yourself, and being cowed by the crowd, in my view, is not infallibly wise and not always to be put up with. All the words, good and bad, are there for use when you think they are appropriate. That is what I think; you can think as you please. I say do not hesitate for a moment to use an ethnic slur or sexist term or unkind word or downright obscenity if and when in your sober judgment or justifiable anger the situation calls for you to be honest, straightforward, and express your true feelings in le mot juste and also in the full knowledge that you can and probably will be held responsible for doing so. But it is morally wrong as well as terribly annoying to be polite to people who are impolite to you or to let others dictate the very words that come out of your thinking and your mouth. Here endeth the lesson for today.

Meanwhile, Skinner is as we say not a patch on Herbert C. Morton, *The Story of Webster's Third* (1994). *W3*, finally, is *small potatoes* (is that in your dictionary?) and ain't of much friggin interest to us who may be on the verge of *WW3*.

David Crystal. Spell it Out. London: Profile, 2012. Pp. 224. £12.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

We reach a peak of pique when we get a peek at a misspelling. Bad spelling permits little minds to throw away the products of larger but careless minds. A silly reader can find a few typographical errors in a texts of hundreds of pages and declare the whole text unreliable and if it is true that a European publisher has offered a big cash prize for any book of 300 pages or more that has not a single such error them no one has ever collected the prize. Perfection seems impossible. English spelling is notoriously difficult to master and Thornsten Veblen said command of it bespeaks the ample free time of the leisure class. Today the leisure class has very little leisure; it is multitasking.

The prolific expert Crystal once again gives us an entertaining as well as authoritative book. Don't worry about typos. He points out that dictionaries have not succeeded in spreading correct spelling. Carelessness breeds carelessness. Other people spelling badly can make you do so. Spell checks often give you an entirely wrong word. What to do? Learn to spell or at least learn to use only words that you (a) can spell or (b) are ready to take the time to look up. Proofread before you SEND. Crystal takes a lot of space to explain why words are spelled (spelt?) as they are, but few people care about etymology. What they do care about is appearing in public with your slips showing, flies unbuttoned, words misspelled.

Polyglots, you not only need to learn languages but to keep on learning them for a lifetime because languages are forever changing, not only in the addition of new words and expressions but even in the spelling of old words. You can in American gry away with not pronouncing the *h* in *what* but the moment you spell *wholesome* without an *h* you will be greeted with jeers, even from people who say *wit'* and *wi'ou'*.

Sarah Ogilvie. Words of the World. New York &c.: Cambridge University Press, 2012, Pp. 257. \$9.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The oft-told tale of the origins and development of the *Oxford English Dictionary* is recounted again, this time by an insider with something of an axe to grind but plenty of interesting information. She rehearses the stories of the obsessive James Murray, who was not of course the "onelie begettor" but simply the overseer of an amateur army of people of leisure who read texts and sent him words to define with citations. As ever. texts not read by those seeking citations meant that a great deal of the language in use went unreported. What happened to lowspeak, vulgarity, dirty words? They are as much a pat of English as erudite latinities and technical jargon and obscure and obsolete words—and a lot more fun, some people might say. Many things of real interest can be found in the gutters. But a lexicographer does not venture everywhere. A dictionary is always replete, not complete. A dictionary on historical principles, like the *OED*, really gives not the first use of a word but the earliest date of whatever citations gave been collected. For slang this is often highly misleading or totally useless.

Now the *OED* is available, updatable, online, and it is increasingly taking notice of unconventional and even vulgar and filthy language, but do not expect complete coverage. The Australian author of this book on the standard dictionary of the English spoken as the world's second language takes

to task a former editor (Burchfield), another Australian. The *OED* has long been in the hands of non-Englishmen, Scots, Australians, and so on, and now Americans are involved. The so-called English Dictionary is now more or less a dictionary of American English. Australian English. Bahamian English, Canadian English and so on down the alphabet, a gigantic compendium of words—the majority not used by any individual today, or by extremely few.

Just looking up a word such as *romantic* permits you to trace changes in thinking over centuries. And if you happen to be reading a novel by a modern logophile such as Anthony Burgess you may run up against words you want to look up, just as you may encounter in prose or poetry of centuries long past words you do not know.

One warning: it is ill advised to say or write any word that you have never heard spoken or seen in print. Just because it is in the dictionary does not mean it is a word that communicates now any more than the fact that it is not in the dictionary mean some new word is "not a word". Take *wyquorn*. You saw it here. I just made it up. It means "a word that is not in the dictionary but was invented in late 2013 by me to convey the idea of showing off by using words that mean nothing to the recipient". It is fated to be, very likely, what lexicographers call a nonce (one-time) word, and they will ignore it.

Benjamin K. Bergen. Louder than Words. New York: Basic Books, 2012. Pp. xii, 296 with Index. \$27.99.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Cognitive science is making great strides and a professor of the subject from the University of California at San Diego outlines what science has documented and what individual scholars suspect and are working on. Bergen explains the advances in how the mind makes meaning, accomplishing analysis better than any modern computer and enabling humans to communicate to and understand each other far better than any other animals although each of us grasps words differently because of our experience and education. We do this by mental simulations, made quickly or more slowly but always incrementally, the same sort of visualization that permits us to see what planning to build something or imagining something involves. The way that someone listens to or reads what you write and adds more than you did not actually specify is amazing and, in this extremely entertaining as well as informative book, amusing. And how do you manage to "assemble the contributions that the various words [you encounter, along with emphases and tones, etc.] make to simulation so that the right parts go together in the right way?"

Making meaning is something we do throughout our daily lives. And sometimes, id we're doing it in the wrong way, at the wrong time, it can have powerful [unwanted] consequences.

When the end of a sentence is reached you may have grasped its intended meaning or you may be puzzled and have more work to do. What happens when we do not use the right words or the correct grammar, or when the words we use or the constructions me make are unknown to the target person?

Bergen examines what is known and what possibly may be discovered about utterances and understandings, about simulation and visualization and covert vocalization and more. He explains mentalization and expression, words and gestures as tools of communication, and much more, with documentation and insight. He brings to the scholarly effort a most unscholarly sense of humor that may make you LOL.

If you do not know what the younger generation means by *LOL* you will see just one of the problems involved. If you know nothing about, for example, baseball or hockey, then some of the explanations in which those sports are referenced will fall on deaf ears.

In his brief introduction to Bergen's remarkable study, George Lakoff asserts:

This is the first book to survey the compelling range of ingenious experimental evidence that shows definitively that the body characterizes the concept by what we call the mind. But the experiments do more than just confirm previous theory and description. They reveal that embodied cognition affects behavior. We act on the basis of how we think and embodied thought changes how we perceive and how we act.

Sean Tunney & Garrett Monaghan, eds. *Web Journalism: A New Form of Citizenship*. Portland &c.: Sussex Academic Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 347. \$34.95.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

This paperback addresses the challenges to journalism created by the cyberage with essays by 30 professors of journalism and/or practitioners involving participatory journalism, managing the BBC news, "citizen-generated content," blogs, and public participation online in general. It obviously is going to be a standard work and also likely to spawn many other investigations and analyses. It is crucial to the understanding of what the Internet means and increasingly is going to mean in connection with more traditional journalism in a rapidly increasing democratization of communication.

Let us be cautious enough to admit that Schumpeter's "creative destruction" will not operate in communication the way the automobile put the makers of buggy whips right out of business. People will still go on to some extent reading hardcover and paperback books as well as e-books, self-publishing will not fully replace traditional publishers, TV news will not render obsolete all news magazines and newspapers, just as printing did not entirely do away with the production of manuscripts. The first automobiles had a dashboard (to protect the driver of the buggy from dirt kicked back by the horse) and for a few years a buggy whip holder. The first printed books might leave a space for a colored initial to be painted in here and there. Instant change is not nearly as likely as some people entranced by the technological revolution seem to think. There will still be old-fashioned dead-tree units available in libraries and books bought even when a huge amount of published works can be downloaded onto your wonderful machines.

Targeted at both undergraduate and graduate students it is essential (and essential as) a textbook but readers of *Geolinguistics* can use it to bring them up to date on what is happening at warp speed in the field of communications in mainstream and other journalism. In the past there was talk of the audience for journalism. Today the audience is talking back in blogs and in other ways, challenging the newspapers and TV stations that hew to the opinions of their owners and allowing the public to criticize and even set political and other agendas. They "re-form the news". If you don't get that then all I can do is quote a line from the film *Cool Hand Luke*: "What we have here is a failure of communication".

As for *citizenship*, think not only of the current yearning for "personship" and its tension with the prediction in Don DeLillo's novel *Mao II* that "the future belongs to crowds". How can community and communication cope with .personal isolation and the mindlessness (or, if you prefer, the new belief in the so-called wisdom) of crowds"?

The cyberage is fracturing masses. It is moving each of us into niches, separating us from face time even as it makes wider and wider, if superficial, chattering possible. One new terror of modern life is the deluge of ever less personal communications in this age of technology, substituting letter writing for junk mail, more of it e-mails and silly twitters, etc. Misogynist poet Philip Larkin's "wish to be alone" in *Wants* is actually coming true. Will you want to beep me about this? If you simply want to bloviate (a newish word) and hit SEND without revising, don't bother. You would be deleted, unread. This may be age of entitlement rather than the age of enlightenment but I grant you no casual imposition on my attention.

A *Dilbert* cartoon has a character say, "The world has been taken over by computers only we don't know it". Most people are actually pretty much aware of what has happened and that the new technology has revolutionized interpersonal communication and the language in which it is conducted. It has redefined many things from privacy to social dynamics. It has given a voice to billions of people and impacted politics and private life. We are blogging and tweeting, revealing ourselves on Facebook, and chatting in 140 characters or screeds, assembling in flash mobs of confining ourselves to home computers, carrying laptops and smartphones everywhere with our bottled water and opinions hastily expressed and sent without a second thought. The old idea that good writing needs revision is no longer popular. Everyone now has a say whether they have anything useful to say or not. Crowds are in the clouds. The new word is crowdsourcing.

Boris Gasparov. *Beyond Pure Reason*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012. Pp. xii, 227. \$50.00 in hardcover, \$39.95 as e-book.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857—1913) revolutionized linguistics and set the course for the development of post-structural literary criticism with three courses he conceived "without anybody's help" and taught in Geneva. Ever since the posthumous publication of Saussure's Course in General Linguistics (1916), from notes Saussure left, scholars of language, especially semiotics, have argued about Saussure's terminology and his daring hypotheses. Now, building on the Leonard Schaft Memorial Lectures he gave at Columbia University in 2006, Boris Gasparov (professor of Russian at Columbia) makes sense of it all and writes in as clear a style as possible given the nature of the matter. This is indeed thoughtful revision Gasparov traces Saussure's ideas on cognition and language to the and worthy of your close attention. German Romantics of Jena's awareness of language's transcendence of the limits of categorical reasoning and the knowledge of children's progressive cognition. This one good use of German Romanticism is vastly to be preferred over the Nazis' distortions of German Romanticism. With Saussure suddenly the flexibility of language and the arbitrariness of its signs, the shifting relationship between the signifier and the signified, and the seeming contradictions and uncompleted arguments in the Course take solid and convincing shape. The book will not all be readily accepted by all but it deserves to be honestly and carefully examined. After all, this will be presented to professors, and professors profess to know and are known to be reluctant to admit that they have been wrong all along. Matters that in other sciences would long since have been settled are often in linguistic science debated over and over, sometimes for generation after generation

This book performs the task of clarifying some matters and even settling some questions and is therefore a major contribution to the philosophy of language, the history of Early German romanticism and linguistic and literary history, especially postmodernism, and in fact the entire subject of the complex nature of meaning and the miracle of human speech. Perhaps we shall have some further good answers when the connectome (the workings of the trillions of connections made in the human brain) is mapped, but the mapping of the genome already has proved that that achievement by no means solves all the problems presented to biologists. So far no one has explained even how the comparatively few distinctions in the DNA of apes and mankind make such a difference, in language and more. We are not so very different from our ancestors—if you happen to believe in evolution, and a surprising number of Americans, not in the scientific community of course, do not. Religion often stands in the way of scientific fact with its anthropomorphic deities and strange ideas, such as that angels speak Hebrew or that incantations in Latin can perform transformative magic and that God made apes and people separately. Meanwhile, speaking of creators, Charlton Heston, in case you want to know, who in *Planet of the Apes* played a human being in the recent remake plays an ape.

Saussure had "constant reminders (to himself as well as to others) that there exists a plethora of alternate perspectives on language, yielding different snapshots that are equally valid yet mutually incompatible". So you see this book may be hard going—but it is well worth any serious scholar's effort.

Regina Freudenfeld & Florian Feuser, eds, *Mit Sprach(en) zym Beruf*. New York &c.: Georg Olms, 2012. Pp. iv, 222. €29.80.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

The German scholarly publisher of Hildesheim with an office in the Empire State Building in New York offers a practical and interdisciplinary survey in German of the policies and practices of polyglots in the globalized world of translation, interpreting, international and intercultural communications and management. There is an increasingly significant career possibility for polyglots, much needed, despite English as a lingua franca worldwide, especially in developing markets. This is an important publication by the SDI (University of Applied Languages, Munich) and it clearly presents the ideas and practices of *Sprachexperten* in the business world as an essential cultural and commercial profession.

These days German is not much taught in US universities but those Americans who can read it will find a great deal of useful information here. The domination of German in philology and some other aspects of linguistics is not what it was back in the 19th-century heyday of nationalistic German language investigators but a great deal of world-class research is going on in such prestigious universities as the Max Plank Institute.

Richard D. Taylor & Amit M. Schejter, eds. *Beyond Broadband Access*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2012. Pp. 288. \$110.00 in harcover, \$35.00 in paperback.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Two professors at Penn State have put together an intriguing collection of papers from experts on communications, economics, language and policy studies, computer and information science and technology. They comment on how those who use and control data bases to set information policies, having to choose between competing and variously connected theories of how information is or ought to be collected and what policies are needed to govern and use data best, what laws ought to be altered or put in place regarding collecting and analyzing and using data. Technology has greatly changed not only the quantity but the quality of data available and presented society with new questions concerning what finding out about the public thinking really means in practice. From privacy to intellectual property rights, from blogs to censorship, the difficulties that have arisen are plentiful and challenging.

All the decisions based on popular data somewhat resemble the political game of buying votes with popular decisions. It is taking the public's pulse. Lyndon Johnson as a pragmatic and vote conscious administrative president did something in the highest office that was not as necessary when he dealt in the corrupt politics of Texas. That was to use trial balloons, leaking that he was proposing to do this or that. If the reception was favorable he went ahead with it and if there was an effective public outcry he would staunchly deny he had ever thought of doing the objectionable thing. Such tactics are more acceptable in representative government than following the perhaps not fully informed *vox populi* when it comes to language and communication policies of government. Those ought to deal in facts, not feelings, correctness rather than welcome or distaste.

The essays by diverse hands that are grouped here add up to an international survey of an important aspect of modern communications from the perspective of various disciplines. The experts also suggest work that needs to be done by business and governments in the establishing of national language policies in addressing such problems as arise from the impact of new technologies on old ideas of freedom of commerce and culture and national organization and individual speech. How soundly based and effective in application are current theories and practices?

Kurt Braunmüller and Christoph Gabriel. *Multilingual Individuals and Multilingual Societies*. Philadelphia &c.: John Benjamins, 2012. Pp. xvi, 474 with Index. \$ 113.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

A wide survey of the topics indicated in the title of this book of studies in numerous Germanic, Romance, and Slavic languages as well as Hungarian, Turkish, Welsh, and several native languages of South Africa is offered by 25 contributors, edited by two professors from Hamburg who edit the Hamburg Studies on Multilingualism (published by Benjamins) These papers, all in English, some dealing with English as a lingua franca and others with other aspects such as Italian-English or Welsh-English, are selected from 120 presented at an international conference on the topics mentioned (Hamburg, 2010). The papers cover research in polylingism's acquisition and use, language dissonance and language attrition in multilingual situations, historical and current polylingualism and variance, and multilingual polices and communication in general. Documentation is extensive and the approaches highly specialized. The contributors are mostly German but some are from Canada, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK, none from the US.

As is (unfortunately) common, the term *geolinguistics* does not occur in the index but there is much here of interest to readers of this journal and in his foreward Braunmüller begins by stating that "the default modes of communication observed in large parts of the world are determined by both individual and societal multilingualism rather than monolingualism". ASG's 2013 international conference will be devoted to polyglots and polyglotism and of course geolinguistics is all about different languages in contact and conflict as well as about language's impact in a monolingual society, but it is difficult in the modern globalized world to think of ant monolingual nation.

The three parts of this highly reliable book, which answers many questions and raises others for future research, are:

- How language is acquired and lost in multilingual settings: first and second language acquisition, foreign languate learning and language attrition
- How language changes in multilingual settings: contact induced language variation and change
- How language is used in multilingual settings: linguistic prectices and policies.

Fiona MacArthur, José Luis Oncins-Martínez, Manuel Sánchez-García, & Ana María Piquer-Píriz, eds. *Metaphor in Use: Context, Culture and Communication.* Philadelphia &c.: John Benjamins, 2012. Pp. x, 379 with Index. \$143.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

'This is another book in a Benjamins series (Human Cognitive Processing) presenting papers from an international conference (7th International Conference on Researching and Applying Metaphor, Extremadura, 2008), The editors, all from that Spanish university, give us 16 detailed papers on research, production, and interpretation, plus metaphor, topic and discourse, and culture, and an afterword focusing on possibilities for future research.

Metaphors are as distinctive as snowflakes we are told, beauty and structure deriving from "dynamical processes of self-organization". The matter is so complex that it is difficult to pull together all the kinds there are and all the ways they operate in all the various cultures and circumstances but there is much that can be said about their nature and utility. Metaphors exist on a number of levels, "lexical, grammatical, conceptual, pragmatic, socio-cultural," we are told here. I think of Emerson's observation—

one I quote perhaps too often—that every word was "once a poem". Naturally metaphors (and similes) play a large part in poetry but both do much to shape our thinking in our prosaic daily lives.

The ways metaphors are conceived and operate in various languages are interesting and useful clues to the different mindsets with which those languages are connected.

Geolinguistics must never forget that all the different languages in use in the world not only have some sort of basic genesis but also all sorts of different ways of thinking imbedded in them. Learning a mother language gives one a tribe's morality and mentality and adding a second language or maybe more languages provides one with more strings to the mental bow, as it were.

Mark Forsyth, Etimologicon. New York: Berkley, 2012. Pp. xx, 279. \$16.00.

Reviewed by Leonard R. N. Ashley

Forsyth, a journalist and general man about words, received the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a christening present "and has never looked back". Now, calling himself The Inky Fool, he has produced in what the London *Times* called the original Icon hardcover the ideal Christmas stocking stuffer (£12.99) that Americans can have cheaper for a delightful source of information and interactive fun. Nobody who uses words or knows somebody who does ought to be without it.

If geolinguistics is language in modern action here is the story of the interaction of languages and the origins and histories of words, how we have disgruntled but not gruntled, how a certain coffee latte is named for the light brown on Capuchin monks' robes, how black is related to white, and how Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo named California before any Spaniard had ever seen it (then thought to be an island off the west coast of North America). We learn why Hitler would have been insulted to be called a Nazi (rather than National Socialist), how "the worn turns" related to the Primitive Indo-European wer ("turn", think of werewolf), about MUD (Multi-Level Dungeon), how buff in film buff came from buffaloes that were really oxen, and there is some discussion of a marijuana joint with remarks on opium joints and jointly smoking one reefer, etc.

This book is as informative and amusing as the one in which an historian some years back linked the most surprising, even unlikely, little things to the development of huge world events. What does shooting pool have to do with chickens? Find out. Sometimes an actor's *role* (we got it from the French and for years spelled it *rôle*) rather obviously comes from plays written on scrolls, along with the UK office of Master of the Rolls, etc., but how a partridge and pumpernickel bread are related in names is far to seek.

Geolinguistically, we see language borrowing and language change and the connections between "mere words" and realities. We are shown language development in an entertaining way. We see facts and flux. We see that the origin of *placebo* (Latin "I will please") was religious, that *cynics* were connected to dogs, and that Harold Bluetooth may have had blue or black teeth (we are uncertain because the names of the two colors have changed). We learn to watch out for atanalaxsis (look it up). The center of an eye is called a pupil because when you look closely into someone else's eye you see a tiny version of yourself and a tiny version of yourself was real when you were a little child, the Latin for which was *pipus* for a boy and *pupa* for a girl. *Pupa* as you may know is now confined to a tiny insect of either sex.

Now go and discover in this book how *spam*--which recently was 70 percent of all Internet communication but has now been reduced, though not nearly enough—is related to a skit on the BBC of Monty Python in which some Viking horde gets into a low British café (there pronounced "kaff") only to discover not only the traditional "chips with everything" but Spam in every recipe. They break out into a boisterous, repetitive song of which the lyrics are:

Spam Spam Spam (repeat, repeat, & c.)

Further with food. as someone who hates tofu I was glad to hear the Chinese name means "rotten beans". That's certain. Not so certain is, for example, why we say "before you can say 'Jack Robinson'" but several theories are advanced by Forsyth and you can take your pick.

By the way, maybe you know Buenos Aires (Good Winds), Canada (Collection of Huts), even Ankara (Anchor)—but do you know the translations of these toponyms?

Abu Dhabi (Father of a Gazelle)
Cairo (Victorious)
Copenhagen (Merchants' Port)
Dublin (Black Pool)
Khartoum (End of Elephant's Trunk)
Nairobi (Place of Col Waters)
Ottawa (Traders)
Panama (Place of Many Fish)
Rekyavik (Smoky Bay)
Ryhad (Garden)
Teheran (Modern)

Joan McConnell and Shuichi Takeda. *Enjoyable Reading II: Zoku Yonde minitsuku Kihonbun kei 100*. Tokyo: Seibido. 2013. Pp. 1, 111. ¥ 2,200.

Reviewed by Shige (CJ) Suzuki Baruch College

This is the second of the "Enjoyable Reading" series by the same authors. As the introductory reading textbook of English for Japanese readers, *Enjoyable Reading II* is an excellent textbook. The intended readership may range from advanced high school students to college-level learners. The textbook is primarily for the purpose of improving English reading skills.

I agree with the author's belief that "English study can and should be enjoyable" which is also demonstrated well in this second series. Yet, unlike the previous publication, *Enjoyable Reading II* contains not only fun and uplifting topics but serious ones as well. As one of the authors, Joan McConnell, mentions in the preface, the conception of this textbook was prompted by the Japan's triple disasters (earthquake, tsunami, and nuclear disasters) that occurred March 11th, 2011. What she witnessed afterwards was, however, not only the suffering of Japanese citizens but also their strong solidarity and the strength to rebuild their communities by "helping each other." This "helping each other" is, as she emphasizes in the preface, an undertone throughout the textbook.

Each chapter is organized around different topics taken from recent and historical social, cultural, and economic themes, including Japan's triple disasters, the cherry blossoms in Washington DC, Steve Jobs' speech, and the dolphin with an artificial tail, etc. Some stories in the readings might be familiar to Japanese readers, which would encourage their English-language learning without being encumbered by cultural unfamiliarity, but these texts are crafted so that they also introduce cross-cultural topics; in particular ones that suggest the importance of human cooperation and alliance.

As an English study book, each reading comes with several questions to check the understanding of the contents. They are well-organized, including comprehension questions, summary exercises, and oral practice. Several practice questions might not be enough of a challenge due to its simplistic tasks such as sentence completion questions which require merely choosing assigned words and syntax identifying questions that require re-ordering words. If the textbook was intended more for "discussing and analyzing the content," as McConnell writes regarding the purpose of the textbook, this publication could have been more appealing to teachers and educators in Japan. Still, the content is appealing enough for classroom application and the practice sections can be compensated by instructors' self-prepared exercises. All in all, the textbook achieves fairly well what the author has sought to do in this series.