

The Official Newsletter of the American Sociological Association Section on  
**ETHNOMETHODOLOGY and  
CONVERSATION ANALYSIS**

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**THE 2012 – 2013  
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Outgoing chair's editorial

**Planning for the Future of our Section**

This edition of the EMCA newsletter marks my last contribution as this section's chair. This ending prompted me to consider some beginnings: I initially became interested in EMCA for the simple reason that I found research in this area more compelling than any other. That remains true today. The reports in our section's panels at the 2012 conference in Denver reflected an admirably high level of scholarship, rigor, and excellence. And the papers members of our section publish continue to define the leading edge of the field in terms of methods and substantive findings. The two outstanding articles selected for our sections "Best Paper" awards (see pp. 3-4 for a write up) exemplify these qualities. These qualities have led to some achievements, including the participation of many international scholars in the section (as well as various forms of international outreach by our members, such as the trip to China detailed in newsletter 6.2). In fact, I suspect the new leadership of our section boasts more international scholars than any other section of the ASA. Their participation is a most welcome development, and a very concrete sign of significant interest in our field.

As a section, however, we continue to face serious challenges. Increasing membership in our section remains a stubborn challenge. Our new co-chairs, Erik Vinkhuyzen and Dirk vom Lehn have made confronting this challenge their first task. (continued, next page)

**Farewell message**

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# Planning for the future of our section

(continued)

In light of the energy, insight and commitment that Erik and Dirk (and their colleagues on the council) bring to their positions I am confident that their efforts will meet with success. Dirk and Erik have already revamped the section's website and launched a Facebook page to increase connections with members – and to entice prospective members to join us. The very active start to their tenure as leaders is to be commended.

My hope is that their energy and commitment will lead to a wider consideration of the state of our section. As our members well know, understanding the relationship between EM/CA and “mainstream” sociology has been an ongoing preoccupation since among the earliest publication in this area. Indeed, the many thoughtful considerations of the various ways our work might matter (or *should* matter) for other areas of sociological inquiry have helped define just what is unique about the phenomena we study and the methods we use to understand them. Despite the impact of these efforts on Sociologists' understanding of social action, social constructivist approaches to social facts (and other matters), the centrality of face-to-face interaction for understanding social life (and social institutions) – and even the possibility of science and measurement, as such -- our section remains more marginal to the ASA than it should be. If it is to thrive, the section will have to search for new ways to engage our colleagues across the ASA. The possible connections we might make have never been more important, or more possible. Our members now publish research in -- and in some cases edit -- a wide range of specialty journals; and after years of arbitrary rejection our work now appears regularly in some of Sociology's flagship publications (SPQ, Social Problems, AJS, and ASR). We should protect these gains – to be sure – but we also need to consider how we might broaden and build on them. At a time when we are positioned to make the most striking contributions to Sociology, our section finds itself in need of a serious, sustained infusion of support, activity and (most of all) *members*. Over the next few years, our incoming chairs will need your support in their efforts to build the section. Please say “yes” when they ask you for help, and seriously consider the proposals they make. We have much work to do.

Yours sincerely,  
Geoffrey Raymond  
UCSB, 2012

# ASA / EMCA Section Award Recipients

## 2012 EMCA Distinguished Publication Award

“The best paper award had a strong field and each entrant had some support from at least one of the judges. However, there was no dispute among them that John Heritage’s paper, ‘Epistemics in action: Action formation and territories of knowledge’, stood out as a landmark paper. In effect, it redefines and reasserts Sacks’s original programme to create a systematic science of social action through the analysis of conversation. As Heritage notes, CA has since tended to shy away from some of the radical implications of that call, partly to avoid some of the problems that arose with the grammatical approach of speech act theory. First actions became neglected in favour of studying second and subsequent actions, leaving open the question of how interactions got going at all. The key to this is epistemic status, which is prior to morphosyntactical features in establishing how an interaction comes to happen and to unfold in a particular direction. Turn design and epistemic status combine to generate action. The paper challenges conventional thinking in CA, as well as in sociology more generally and in cognate disciplines including linguistics, anthropology and psychology. Heritage hints at a future engagement with the reductionist accounts of neuroscience. This is a profound and profoundly original paper and a worthy winner of the award in any year.” Robert Dingwall, Award Committee Chair

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### **Epistemics in Action: Action Formation and Territories of Knowledge** **John Heritage**

***Department of Sociology University of California at Los Angeles***

RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION, 45(1), 1–29, 2012



This article considers the role of grammatical form in the construction of social action, focusing on turns that either assert or request information. It is argued that the epistemic status of a speaker consistently takes precedence over a turn’s morphosyntactically displayed epistemic stance in the constitution of the action a turn is implementing. Insofar as asserting or requesting information is a fundamental underlying feature of many classes of social action, consideration of the (relative) epistemic statuses of the speaker and hearer are a fundamental and unavoidable element in the construction of social action. A range of examples illustrate patterns of convergence and divergence in the relation between epistemic status and epistemic stance.

Even where an utterance is in the linguistic form of a question, and seems to be doing questioning, the latter will not be adequately accounted for by the former. For if the question form can be used for actions other than questioning, and questioning can be accomplished by linguistic forms other than questions, then a relevant problem can be posed not only about how a question does something other than questioning, but about how it does questioning; not only about how questioning is done by non-question forms, but about how it gets accomplished by question forms. (Schegloff, 1984, pp. 34–35)

We could not utter a phrase meaningfully unless we adjusted lexicon and prosody according to what the categoric or individual identity of our putative recipients allows us to assume they already know, and knowing this, don’t mind our openly presuming on it. At the very center of interaction life is the cognitive relation we have with those present before us, without which relationship our activity, behavioral and verbal, could not be meaningfully organized. And although this cognitive relationship can be modified during a social contact, and typically is, the relationship itself is extrasituational, consisting of the information a pair of persons have about the information each other has of the world, and the information they have (or haven’t) concerning the possession of this information. (Goffman, 1983, pp. 4–5)

# ASA / EMCA Section Award Recipients

## 2012 EMCA Graduate Student Paper Award

"The panel were unanimous in deciding that the award for best graduate student paper should be awarded to Trevor Benjamin for his paper 'When problems pass us by: Using "You mean" to help locate the source of trouble". This investigates other-initiated repairs to interactional problems. An analysis of understanding checks marked by 'you mean' explores the preference organization for repair, for contiguity over non-contiguity, and the work that is done when this does not occur in the default position. The judges commended the way in which the paper showed wide knowledge of relevant literature in the field and built on this in a systematic fashion to identify and define a previously unremarked phenomenon. This original observation was carefully documented through skilful analysis of a range of materials. It establishes a foundation for a promising line of further investigations into the preference for contiguity, which seems to characterize a number of actions in talk, in English and related languages. It is a mature and sophisticated analysis by any standards and particularly commendable in a scholar at the beginning of their career." Robert Dingwall, Award Committee Chair

### **When Problems Pass Us By: Using "You Mean" to Help Locate the Source of Trouble**

**Trevor Benjamin**

***Center for Language and Cognition***

***University of Groningen, The Netherlands***

RESEARCH ON LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION, 45(1), 82–109, 2012



Sometimes a person may require the previous speaker to repeat, explain, confirm, etc., what they have just said. Such "other-initiations of repair," as they are called, usually come sharply. On occasion, however, they are issued some time after the offending talk has passed. This might pose a puzzle to the previous speaker who would normally expect problems to be identified immediately. This article argues that recipients can help them by signaling that their other-initiation has, for whatever reason, become separated from the source of the trouble. This is first shown for the particular practice of using "you mean . . ." to check one's understanding. A variety of similar practices are then collected together to suggest that the need for managing this puzzle is quite generic and widespread. Finally, it is shown that such practices can have consequences for our understanding of repair more broadly. Examining their use allows us to refine our characterization of where other-initiations normally occur and provides evidence that this contiguous positioning is preferred over noncontiguous positioning.

The chair and members of the council thank Robert Dingwall for his service as chair of the 2012 Awards Committee.

# UPCOMING CONFERENCES & Calls for Papers/Submissions

... At a Glance ...

**ASA 2013 Annual Meeting**  
**Call For Papers – Launch (on website)**  
October 30, 2012

**13<sup>th</sup> International Pragmatics Conference**  
**DEADLINE** for panels, lectures and posters  
November 1, 2012

**International Communication Association  
(ICA) Conference**  
**DEADLINE** for papers/abstracts and panels  
November 1, 2012

**AIEMCA 2012: Biennial conference of the  
Australian Institute of Ethnomethodology  
and Conversation Analysis**  
Southbank, Brisbane, Australia  
November 29 – 30, 2012

**Special Issue of Gender and Language**  
**DEADLINE** for submitting summaries  
November 30, 2012

**ASA 2013 Annual Meeting**  
**Online submission system OPENS**  
December 7, 2012

**6<sup>th</sup> Annual Conversation Analysis Day at  
Loughborough University, U.K.**  
December 17, 2012

**ASA 2013 Annual Meeting**  
**DEADLINE** for submissions  
January 9, 2013

**19<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on Language,  
Interaction and Social Organization (LISO)**  
**DEADLINE** for abstract submissions  
University of California at Santa Barbara  
January 15, 2013

**Membership Categorization Analysis**  
**DEADLINE** for abstract submissions  
January 30, 2012

**Language/Social Interaction Interest Group  
Western States Communication  
Association (WSCA)**  
**2013 Annual Convention**  
Reno, NV  
February 15 – 19, 2013

## INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION ASSOCIATION (ICA) CONFERENCE LANGUAGE AND SOCIAL INTERACTION DIVISION

London, U.K.  
June 17 – 21, 2013

**Paper & Extended Abstracts.** Individual paper authors should submit either a full paper (~25 pages) or a well-developed extended abstract similar to a conference-presentation length paper (1500-3000 words). All paper submissions (full papers & extended abstracts) will be judged together, however, only full papers will be considered for the Top Paper and Top Student Paper Awards. Extended abstracts should at minimum include a rationale/background, description of methods (if appropriate), and at least some initial analysis (as appropriate).

**Panels.** Panel proposals will also be considered. Panel proposals should include a title, 150-word abstract, 400-word rationale for the panel as well as abstracts from each panelist if appropriate. Because LSI accepts extended abstracts, higher-ranking panel proposals should use the panel format in innovative ways (so not just four papers on a similar topic).

Please read the ICA submission rules carefully for information about preparing your document and de-identifying authors. You may submit more than one submission to LSI, however, only one first-authored paper will be accepted for presentation in this division.

Attendees from "soft currency" countries and ethnic minority members may apply for financial support from ICA's Diversity Travel Funds. Please apply for consideration by sending a separate message addressed to the program planner listed below. You will need to attend the business meeting to receive the travel grant.

**Deadline:** All submissions must be completed online no later than **23:00 EST, 1 November 2012.**

To avoid technical problems, early submission is strongly encouraged. It is essential that you read the complete instructions carefully and prepare your submission prior to logging on. **NOT FOLLOWING THE GUIDELINES MAY CAUSE YOUR SUBMISSION TO NOT BE REVIEWED.**

For additional information about the ICA 2013 Conference, please go to: <https://www.icahdq.org/conf/index.asp>

If you have questions about submitting to the LSI Division, please contact the LSI Vice Chair and Conference Program Planner:  
Dr. Theresa Castor, University of Wisconsin-Parkside, USA  
[castor@uwp.edu](mailto:castor@uwp.edu)

# UPCOMING CONFERENCES & Calls for Papers/Submissions

... *At a Glance* cont'd ...

**ASA 2013 Annual Meeting  
Program Schedule Announced**  
April 30, 2013

**ASA 2013 Annual Meeting**  
**DEADLINE Pre-Registration for Participants**  
May 15, 2013

**International Communication Association  
Language and Social Interaction Division**  
ICA Conference  
June 17 – 21, 2013  
London, U.K.

**4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on  
Conversation Analysis & Clinical  
Encounters (CACE), and CA and  
Psychotherapy**  
July 5 – 8, 2013  
University of York, U.K.

**International Institute for  
Ethonomethodology and Conversation  
Analysis Conference 2013**  
August 5 – 8, 2013  
University of Waterloo – Waterloo, Ontario,  
Canada

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**ASA 2013 ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Interrogating Inequality**  
August 10 – 13, 2013  
New York, New York

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**13<sup>th</sup> International Pragmatics Conference**  
**Narrative Pragmatics:**  
**Culture, Cognition, Context**  
September 8 – 13, 2013  
New Delhi, India

**4th International Conference on  
Conversation Analysis (ICCA-14)**  
June 26 – 29, 2014  
**With Pre-conference workshops**  
June 23 – 25, 2014  
UCLA – Los Angeles, CA

## **19TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE ON LANGUAGE, INTERACTION, AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION "POWER, CONFLICT, INEQUALITY"**

Santa Barbara, CA – *University of California*  
May 10 – 12, 2013

The LISO conference promotes interdisciplinary research and discussion in the analysis of naturally occurring human interaction. Papers will be presented by national and international scholars on a variety of topics in the study of language, interaction, and culture. The papers primarily employ analysis of naturally occurring data drawing from methodologies that include conversation analysis, discourse analysis, ethnographic methods, ethnomethodology, interactional linguistics, and interactional sociolinguistics. We welcome abstracts from graduate students and faculty working in the areas of Anthropology, Applied Linguistics, Cognitive Science, Communication, Education, Linguistics, Psychology, and Sociology.

### **Featured plenary speakers:**

*Marjorie Harness Goodwin (UCLA, Linguistic Anthropology)*

*Kira Hall (CU Boulder, Linguistics)*

*Susan Speer (University of Manchester, Psychology)*

*Kathryn Woolard (UCSD, Anthropology)*

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES**

Abstracts must be submitted via email to [lisoconference@gmail.com](mailto:lisoconference@gmail.com). The body of the email should include name(s) of author(s), affiliation, and contact information. The attached abstract must be in doc, docx, or pdf format only, and must not include the author's name or any other identifying information. Abstracts have a 500 word maximum; those longer than 500 words may not be read in full by reviewers. The abstract should include the following:

- a clear statement of the main point or argument of the paper
- a brief discussion of the problem or research question with reference to previous research and the work's relevance to the area of study
- a short piece of data to support the main point or argument conclusions and/or implications of the research, however tentative

**Deadline for submission of abstracts is January 15, 2013.** Late submissions will not be accepted. Notification of (non-)acceptance will be sent no later than March 31, 2013. Accepted abstracts will have either\* (a) 20 minutes for presentation and 10 minutes for discussion; or (b) 25 minutes for a data session (small group presentation/discussion of research and data).

\* to be determined by the abstract review committee

# UPCOMING CONFERENCES & Calls for Papers/Submissions

## SPECIAL ISSUE of *Gender and Language* on “*Gender, language, communication and the media*”

*Gender and Language* invite papers on the topic of gender, language, communication and the media for a forthcoming special issue in 2014. We invite papers that deploy various methods (e.g., linguistics, discourse analysis, pragmatics, content analysis, critical discourse analysis, conversation analysis, narrative analysis, and sociolinguistics) to explore the relationship(s) between gender and related topics (e.g. sexism, sexuality, sexualisation, post-feminism) and the media as broadly conceived (e.g. newspapers, television, radio, online environments).

Over recent years, issues to do with ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ have become increasingly visible across various forms of contemporary media. But how are we to understand the varied ways in which such phenomena are unpacked, reformulated, constructed, deleted, and so on, in and through these media? This special issue aims to pull together a diverse range of papers that all coalesce around the following sorts of questions:

1. How are contemporary media representations, stereotypes and accounts of gender constructed in the media?
2. What, if anything, is new, unique and distinct about the ways in which gender is constructed in and through such media representations?
3. How is it possible, methodologically, to capture something like gender, and how can we know when we have found “it”?

Please send a 750 word summary of your proposed paper, detailing **\*provisional\*** title, topic, methods, and findings. We will let you know at this outline stage whether or not your paper looks to be a ‘good fit’ for the special issue. Authors of papers that fit with the issue’s aims will then be invited to submit a full length paper of between 5000-7000 words (including abstract, data and references). Papers will be subject to the usual peer review process.

The **deadline for submitting 750 word summaries is November 30th 2012**. Please submit your summary to the special issue editor, Dr Frederick Attenborough ([f.t.attenborough@lboro.ac.uk](mailto:f.t.attenborough@lboro.ac.uk)). The **deadline for full length papers is May 15th 2013**.

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### Membership Categorisation Analysis. Studies of Social Knowledge in Action

Over the past decade there has been resurgence of interest in Sacks’ work on membership categories under the heading of Membership Categorisation Analysis (MCA). This recent increase in interest has resulted in an expansion, rapid take up and development of Sacks’ ideas through the increasing cumulative body of work which now underpins MCA research. While maintaining a commitment to recovering the social cultural recourses people use in their everyday interactions recent engagement and development of Sacks’ ideas has seen MCA move beyond the original sociological focus to be taken up in areas such as communication, psychology, discourse analysis, linguistics, media studies, anthropology and political science.

The proposed collection seeks to capture and promote the growing interest in Membership Categorisation Analysis applied to the situated study of social-knowledge-in-action in a multidisciplinary contexts. To this end we are inviting papers that explore current developments and applications of MCA through multidisciplinary areas and a range of topical foci as well as exploring the methodological developments which take account of the multiple layers of category work and orientations, the display of social knowledge and knowledge entitlement, the organisation of moral ordering, the deployment of social norms and the orientation to interactional context.

At this stage we are inviting expressions of interest to this collection through submitting a 500 word outline of proposed papers. The **due date for the abstracts is Monday 30th January 2012**.

Expressions of Interest or further questions should be sent to: Richard Fitzgerald at [r.fitzgerald@ug.edu.au](mailto:r.fitzgerald@ug.edu.au)

## 2013 Section Membership Form

For ASA membership information and to join –or– renew online, visit:

<http://www.asanet.org/members/join.cfm>

### 2013 ASA Membership Dues:

\_\_\_\_\_ Regular: \$20 - \$196  
(sliding scale, based on income)

\_\_\_\_\_ Associate: \$47

\_\_\_\_\_ Student: \$20

\_\_\_\_\_ Emeritus: \$47

\_\_\_\_\_ International: \$47

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mail to:

Membership Services  
American Sociological Association  
1430 K Street, NW – Suite 600  
Washington DC 20005

\_\_\_\_\_ I am an ASA member and want to join the  
**Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis  
Section**. Enclosed is a check for \$10.00 for 2012  
section dues (\$5.00 for students).

*Make checks payable to **American Sociological  
Association** (and please put “EMCA section dues” on  
the memo line of your check).*

## ASA announces programming information for the 108<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting “Interrogating Inequality: Linking Micro and Macro

New York, NY  
August 10 – 13, 2013

The 2013 Call for Papers will launch on the ASA website on October 30, 2012.

- **December 7, 2012:** Online system opens for submission of papers, discussion topics, and posters.
- **January 9, 2013:** Submission site closes; Session Organizers begin reviewing the submissions.
- **April 30, 2013:** Program schedule announced; no scheduling information is available prior to that date.
- **May 15, 2013:** Preregistration deadline for program participants.