

Daniel C. Nützel (1962–2013): In Memoriam

Daniel C. Nützel, member of the SGAS Executive Committee, coeditor of the *SGAS Newsletter*, member of the Editorial Board of the *Yearbook of German-American Studies*, respected colleague and friend, died suddenly on April 13, 2013. Dan's passing came as a shock to all who were associated with him. The entire SGAS family mourns his death. He was a member of the faculty of the I.U. School of Liberal Arts at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI), having only begun his professional career there in 2009 as Associate Professor of German, Hoyt-Reichmann Scholar of German-American Studies, and Director of the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies at IUPUI.



Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, Dan Nützel graduated from Xavier University (Cincinnati) with a Bachelor of Arts in Classical Studies and French. He studied at the University of Paris and at the University of Hamburg before he returned to pursue a Masters in German Literature and German-American Studies at the University of Cincinnati. A two-year period as a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Bayreuth and a doctoral degree in German Linguistics from Purdue University in 1998 culminated his academic preparation. His doctoral research made him a specialist on the East Franconia dialect of southern Indiana. His teamwork as a field researcher dialectologist and sociolinguist in the next decade (1998-2009) at the University of Regensburg

and the University of Bayreuth in Germany is reflected in his contributions to four linguistic atlases (Atlas of Northeastern Bavaria, Upper Bavaria, Small Bavarian Linguistic Atlas, and Atlas of German Dialects in the Czech Republic). His research participation in the Bavarian dialect atlas was a major undertaking, a twelve-year collaborative project which received funding from the German equivalent to our National Endowment for the Humanities. The Atlas of German Dialects in the Czech Republic is one of the largest dialectological projects in the German-speaking world.

Dan Nützel was an internationally known scholar in German language and German-American dialects. He was also an expert in German-American Studies, Sociolinguistics, Dialectology, Historical Linguistics, and Transnational Studies. His publications include two books: *The Moribund East Franconian Dialect of Haysville, Indiana* (2009) and *The German-Bohemian Dialect Remembered* (2009), journal articles and book chapters in edited collections on language contact and new dialect formation, paths leading to language extinction, and structural changes and loss in dying dialects. His 2009 book on the German dialect of Haysville has been described as the most detailed comparative study in German-American dialectology.

Collaborative research was a hallmark of Dan Nützel's scholarship. His ability to maintain longstanding working relationships with the University of Bayreuth and the University of Regensburg while embarking in more recent collaborations with research groups at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Pennsylvania State University speaks volumes of Dan's high stature as a researcher and commitment to his research projects. His most recent work, in 2012, focused on heritage language syntax and on the morphosyntactic stability of American German. This latest work was the result of a fruitful inter-institutional collaboration on the study of linguistic aspects of Germanic heritage languages, a topic of common interest to German-American Studies scholars, German linguists, and linguists in general.

Daniel Nützel taught courses in German Linguistics and German-American studies. His superb skills as a teacher were often recognized by students, who highlight his motivating teaching style and attention to their individual needs regarding course content and career opportunities. His engagement with students was reflected as well in his supervision of students conducting research projects, sometimes involving service to the community, such as the organization of an exhibit about Germans in Indianapolis. As one German major commented, losing Dr. Nützel is "like having an academic rock taken away from you." His tenure at IUPUI was characterized by intense and extraordinary professional service to his professional discipline, the department, school, campus, and local community. Most notably, he served as director of the Max-Kade German-American Center at IUPUI, President

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of the Indiana German Heritage Society, co-director of the publications committee for this Society, and, internationally, he was linguistics book review editor for Transnational German Studies.

[Adapted from the memorial resolution placed in the minutes of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis Faculty Council, prepared by Marta Antón, Chair of World Languages and Cultures, along with Gabrielle Bersier, Director of the Program in German, and Claudia Grossmann, Interim Director of the Max Kade Center for German-American Studies at IUPUI.]

William D. Keel, editor

