

In Memory of Charles B. Wordell

It is our sad duty to report that the editor of the *Nanzan Review of American Studies* for the past ten years, Charles B. Wordell, died on 1 November 2004. As a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and a devotee of New Orleans culture and a musician himself, he would enjoy the appropriateness of a jazz band playing “When the Saints Come Marching in” on All Saints Day, the anniversary of his death.

Charles’s quick wit, extravagant imagination, and nimble tongue often interjected odd humor at the beginning of a discussion. But just as quickly he could turn serious and recite a string of significant suggestions. As an editor he was always on the prowl for articles, often joking with a prospective author. Once I flippantly stated a topic in reply, and immediately Charles gave several pertinent modifications that would make it suitable for the journal.

With his graduate degrees from the University of Louisville and the University of Chicago and Peace Corp teaching in Africa, Charles had all the necessary credentials and abilities for a teacher. In addition he was an entertainer, a great quality to help enliven the general language courses that make up the larger part of every teaching schedule in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Nanzan. Teaching was his joy. What he could not imagine was getting well paid for something he liked doing so much.

But Charles was perhaps most ecstatic in the role of editor, a privilege he saw not as something to post for academic promotion but as a trust to pass on the researched and well-expressed knowledge of others to an appreciative audience. Not only was Charles active in searching out and taking charge of editing articles, but also, to ensure their proper presentation, he prepared the entire layout of the journal, making a camera-ready copy for the printers. He dreamed of expanding the journal to two issues a year, and probably would have achieved it with the help of the new graduate school in area studies and the future Nagoya Summer Seminar (in American Studies).

Charles came to the journal with experience editing the *JALT Journal* and two books on language teaching in Japan: *A Guide to Teaching English in Japan* and *Teach English in Japan*. His career-long study was the image of Japan in American popular culture. This led to a book-length treatment, *Japan’s Image in America: Popular Writing About Japan, 1800-1941* and lengthy introductions to two collections of reprinted editions: *Japan in American Fiction: Series One* and *Series Two*. His most recent on-going project was the image of New Orleans in film and fiction.

His passing leaves a huge hole at the journal but also numerous gaps at the university because of his energy, eclecticism, and generosity. He taught a variety of subjects at different levels and accepted multiple posts that became known to many only when replacements were hastily sought.

Charles's last issue of the *Nanzan Review of American Studies* was the 25th in the series. With his death, that may have been a fitting juncture to end the series. But at least there had to be a commemorative issue to celebrate his endeavors for the journal. And this celebratory effort, together with the inspiration of his memory may be enough to move the *Nanzan Review of American Studies* forward for another ten or even twenty-five years.

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