

## **IN MEMORIAM**

### **JOHN G. BORDIE**

John Bordie was born in Chicago on April 3, 1931. He received his bachelor's degree at the University of Chicago in 1949. In subsequent years (1954-63), he spent extended periods living and traveling in Pakistan, India, Turkey, Ethiopia, Lebanon, and Jordan.

John Bordie's career at The University of Texas began in 1951 when he arrived in Austin for graduate school. In 1958, he completed his dissertation, *A Descriptive Phonology of Sindhi*, an Indo-European language spoken in Pakistan. During his graduate school years, he received fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies (1953-55) and the Rockefeller Foundation (1956-57) to conduct research on Sindhi. Years later (1980-81), he was awarded a Fulbright-Hays Lecture Award that again took him to Pakistan.

After graduate school, John moved to Georgetown University where, from 1958-61, he was an Assistant Professor of English and Linguistics. During this time (1959-60), he was director of Georgetown's English Language School in Ankara, Turkey. After Georgetown, he moved first to the Electronic Teaching Laboratories in Washington, DC, and then to the Peace Corps where he was a Training Officer with responsibilities for the Middle East. Prior to his return to UT in 1966, he was Deputy Assistant Director of the Peace Corps with responsibilities for university relations and training with regard to Asia and North Africa. During 1963-96, he authored several language courses for the Peace Corps, including courses on Dari and Kurdish. Kurdish would be a continuing interest, as represented by a 1979 chapter on the "Kurdish Dialects of Eastern Turkey."

When he returned to Austin in 1966, John was jointly appointed as an Associate Professor in the Departments of Curriculum and Instruction, and Linguistics. Early on, he had administrative

duties as Associate Director of the International Office. He was promoted to the rank of full Professor in 1973. During 1974-89, he was Director of the Foreign Language Education Center (FLEC) in the College of Education. John was the animating force behind FLEC's graduate program; he worked closely with its students as the program's Graduate Advisor and as the thesis advisor for numerous masters and Ph.D. students. Former students who added their thoughts to his online obituary complimented him for his patience, his insight, and the support he offered them.

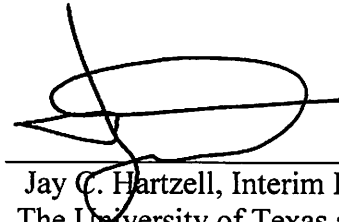
A surprising—and rather pioneering—interest lay in solar energy. In 1980, John was one of two UT Austin faculty members appointed to the Texas Solar Advisory Committee; according to a University press release dated April 4, 1980, John was appointed to provide “recommendations to the Texas Energy and Natural Resources Advisory Council on the future of solar energy and other renewable energy forms.” His expertise in this area came from his having lived in “an underground solar-heated residence...since 1976.” John published several pieces on this topic, including an entry on solar power in Texas that appeared in the Texas State Historical Association's 1985 *Handbook of Texas*.

Conversation with John was always rewarding. He had experiences and eccentric interests that made him a pleasure to talk to. During graduate school, he did extensive field research on the language of cedar choppers here in central Texas, and he had a wealth of information about them: about their feuds that were reminiscent of and sometimes carried over from the time of the Hatfields & McCoys, about their traditions, and about their cuisine and cooking methods—which were pretty much endless variants on barbeque, pinto beans, and potato salad.

John's teaching was eclectic. Another member of the Department of Linguistics faculty, Bob King, remembers that, in the 1970s, John taught a course for undergraduates on cryptology. John used to run his homework assignments past Bob, and the two talked a lot about what he was

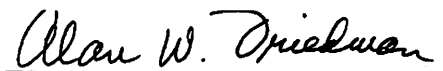
doing in class. Those conversations in turn got Bob interested in cryptanalysis, and that led to an undergraduate seminar on “Spies, Espionage, and Treason” that he taught for many years.

John retired from the faculty at the end of the fall semester 1994 and was subsequently appointed Professor Emeritus. He died on January 23, 2020. John was survived by his wife Camilla, who died on April 6, 2020; by his children Ruth, Robin, and Ralph; and grandchildren Nora and Calla.



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Jay C. Hartzell, Interim President  
The University of Texas at Austin



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Alan W. Friedman, Secretary  
The General Faculty

This memorial resolution was prepared by a special committee consisting of Professor Richard Meier (Chair) and Professor Emeritus Robert King.