



American Name Society

Bulletin

In This Issue

Call For Papers: 2027 American Name Society Annual Meeting	1-2
2025 Names of the Year	2-3
And the Winner is. . . 2025 NAMES Best Article of the Year Award	3
Virtual ANS Panel at 2027 MLA Conference	4
NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics Reviewers Needed!	4
Call for Book Chapter Proposals on Names, Crime, and the Law	5-6
Book Reviews: A Thank You and an Invitation	6
Call for Book Proposals	6
Adrian Koopman: A Pillar of African Names Scholarship Passes	6-7
2026 ANS Executive Council	8-10

Call For Papers: 2027 American Name Society Annual Meeting

February 20, 2027
Online, via Zoom

The American Name Society is now inviting proposals for papers for its next annual conference. The one-day event will be held virtually via Zoom, allowing for the attendance of onomastics scholars from around the world. The 2027 ANS conference will **not be** held in conjunction with the Linguistics Society of America conference.

Abstracts in any area of onomastic research are welcome: personal names, place names, business and institutional names, names theory, names in literature, among others.

Proposals require these elements:

- Title of proposed paper
- 250-word abstract
- Shorter 100-word abstract suitable for inclusion in conference program
- 50-word biography suitable for inclusion in conference program

cont'd p. 2

To submit a proposal, complete the 2027 Author Information Form found here: <https://bit.ly/4AbOpmT>.

Email completed forms to the ANS at abstracts@americannamesociety.org.

For organizational purposes, place “ANS2027” in the subject of your email.

The DEADLINE for receipt of abstracts is October 31, 2026.

All proposals will be subjected to blind review. Notification of proposal acceptances will be sent by November 15, 2026. Authors whose papers have been accepted must be **current members of ANS and must register for the annual meeting**. Please contact us at info@americannamesociety.org if you have any questions or concerns.

We look forward to receiving your submission!

2025 Names of the Year

by Professor I.M. Nick

No Kings was chosen as the winner of the Name of the Year for 2025 by the American Name Society at its annual Name of the Year discussion and vote on January 8, 2026. This political demonstration name was selected for its direct communicative power, its linguistic brevity, and its extensions during the protests, in forms such as “no thrones” and “no crowns.” It was also the winner of the Miscellaneous Name of the Year category.

Zohran Mamdani was chosen as Personal Name of the Year. Mamdani is a U.S. American

Democratic politician and the newly elected Mayor of New York City, the first Muslim and Asian American mayor. His name reflects his multicultural identity, one reason for his popularity among voters. He has corrected the pronunciation of his name frequently on air and encouraged people to learn it and to pronounce it correctly. Other candidates in this category included *Sydney Sweeney*, *Luigi Mangione*, *Kennedy*, *Charlie Kirk*, *Leo/Pope Leo XIV*, *Epstein*, *d4vd*, and *Elon*.

Gulf of America was voted Place Name of the Year. In January 2025, an executive order from President Trump was issued directing U.S. federal agencies to rename the Gulf of Mexico the Gulf of America, and U.S. digital maps began reflecting this change. This sparked national debate about naming, geography, and identity. Other candidates in this category included the *Louvre*, *Kennedy Center*, *Alligator Alcatraz*, and *Mount McKinley*.

Labubu won the title Brand Name of the Year. It is the name of a plush toy which became a global fashion trend and collectible in 2025. The name seems nonsensical and childish, despite the toys themselves being collected largely by adult women and used as charms on luxury designer bags. Popularity led to fakes called *Lafufus*, showing the name’s linguistic productivity. Other candidates in this category included *Sora*, *Gemini* (Google’s AI assistant), *PBS*, and *Anthropic*.

Eleven, the name of a female character in the Netflix series *Stranger Things*, was chosen as Artistic Name of the Year. Her name came originally from being research subject number 11, which then was used as the basis for her first name, written in letters.

cont’d p. 3

Once she escaped the laboratory, she was given a series of new names: *El*; *Jane Ives*, with her first name being the same as her long-lost birth mother; and *Jane Hopper*, which features her stepfather's surname. Each of those names represents different aspects of the character's personal development and social relationships. Other candidates in this category included *bbno\$*, *Coldplay*, *Kpop Demon Hunters*, *Stranger Things*, *Heated Rivalry*, and *Wicked for Good*.

Claude was voted E-Name of the Year.

Introduced by Anthropic as an AI assistant, this name is said to be inspired by real-life mathematician Claude Shannon, widely credited with inventing information theory. It is noteworthy that the name *Claude* in the United States is also given to male children, as compared to the best-known female-coded and named AI assistants, Siri and Alexa. Other candidates in this category included *#BookTok*, *Sora*, *Dumb Masculinity*, *Gen Beta*, *Jessica* (replacement name for *Karen* in memes), and *#3E* (End Impunity, End Autogenocide, and End Oligarchy).

In the Miscellaneous category – names that do not fit into any of the previous five categories – the winner was *No Kings*, the name of protests held in June 2025 in the US (and elsewhere) against the authoritarian actions of the Trump administration. The protests, supported by chants of “no thrones” and “no crowns” and recalling the American revolution against the British crown, characterized Trump as a king rather than a democratically elected leader. The name was also a direct response to White House social media, which had posted an image depicting Trump as a king; Trump and his allies referred to him with monarchical terminology and claims of divine legitimacy. Other names in this category included *Donroe Doctrine*, *Antifa*, *Kavanaugh Stop*, and *Melissa* (hurricane).

And the Winner is... 2025 NAMES Best Article of the Year Award



In the winter of each year, the members of the *NAMES* Editorial Board review and select the best article of the year. Articles are judged across three criteria: 1.) creativity and originality, 2.) potential scholarly contribution to onomastics, and 3.) writing style and organization. For 2025, the international team of onomastic experts on the *NAMES* Board selected “Mapping Place Names” for the prestigious award. The winning publication was co-authored by Søren Wichmann and Lennart Chevallier of the University of Kiel in Germany.

The article appears in the volume 74, no. 3 of *NAMES*. This cutting-edge piece of research was selected for its innovative methodological approach, exemplary use of dynamic and highly informative graphics, as well as its concise yet engaging scientific writing. This outstanding piece of research can be read online, free of charge, via the *NAMES* website. While there, names enthusiasts are encouraged to explore the journal's open-access archive where all publications featured in *NAMES* are freely available to the international scientific community and general public.

Virtual ANS Panel at 2027 MLA Conference

January 10, 2027

What do Beowulf, Freud, and a parking lot attendant have in onomastic commonality? Find out at the online ANS panel at the 2027 MLA Conference on Sunday, January 10, 2027.

The panel, “Names That Reveal, Names That Conceal: Onomastic Sleight of Hand in Global Literature,” features acts of naming as acts of power as found in the liminal space between the real and the imagined, i.e., as found in a range of literature. Panelists and presentations are:

- Angus Warren, Yale University: “A Canting Epithet of *Beowulf*: Grendel the Killjoy”
- Andrea Gadberry, New York University: “Monsieur Bonjour’s Dream; or, Name as Oneiric Interjection”
- Diana Filar, US Merchant Marine Academy: “Anonymity in *The Parking Lot Attendant*: Naming Diasporic Futurity in Contemporary Migrant Literature”

The panel begins at 10:15 a.m. PST (1:15 p.m. EST), and you must be registered for the conference to attend. Bonus in registering is that MLA offers numerous virtual panels on each of the four-day conference (January 7-10, 2027).

Need more information? Email Dr. Anne Anderson, Allied Conference Coordinator at awanderson.editing@gmail.com.

NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics Reviewers Needed!

We are currently seeking new applicants to join the *NAMES* Editorial Board.

Although onomastic specialists in all areas of onomastic research are welcome to apply, we have a particular need for scholars with expertise in the following areas:

- literary onomastics
- corpus linguistics
- statistical methods
- Asian languages

Interested applicants should be native or near native speakers of English, have published in onomastics, and be a member in good standing of the ANS or an allied onomastic scholarly society (e.g. The Canadian Society for the Study of Names, the International Council of Onomastic Sciences, The Society for Name Studies in Britain and Ireland, etc.). Familiarity with a modern language other than English is also a bonus.

As a general rule, Editorial Board members will not be expected to review more than two manuscripts per month. In addition, all members of the Editorial Board participate in the selection of the Best Article of the Year.

If you are interested in joining our team, please complete the application from available here: <https://nick662.typeform.com/to/P6dzaz>.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Professor I. M. Nick at nameseditor@gmail.com.

Call for Book Chapter Proposals on Names, Crime, and the Law

One of the most fascinating areas of interdisciplinary research involving onomastics, criminology, and the law is forensic onomastics. The current call for book chapter proposals is for an upcoming publication in the Bloomsbury book series, “Names and Naming in the Social Sciences and Humanities.” Possible topics of interest include but are not limited to the following:

- Names of crimes, criminals, victims, and/or law enforcement agencies
- Crimes involving the illegal use of names (e.g. identity theft, trademark infringement, verbal threats involving malicious name-calling; the use of names to identify potential crime victims)
- The names of laws and policies at any level of governance.
- Laws and policies governing the use or alteration of names
- Strategies for the translation or transliteration of names in forensic contexts
- Clandestine names used by criminals to describe themselves, their products, their organizations, their activities, and/or their targets
- The ways in which the media uses names to report on crimes or criminals
- Official strategies and/or policies used by law enforcement to analyze, process, or store onomastic data relevant in criminal investigations
- Legal cases fought over names (e.g., the right to use a product name; lawsuits over potentially pejorative names)

- The ways in which names may be used during the commission of a crime (e.g., name-calling in threat communications or cases of defamation; the use of harmful names to demean or control victims; the use of names in cases of identity theft)
- The literary use of names in (true) crime fiction.

Proposals examining any name type are welcome. Although all proposals must be written in English, the papers proposed may involve any language(s), spoken, written, or signed. Both diachronic and synchronic approaches are welcome.

Investigations may employ qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. However, the analysis proposed must be clearly on focused on the onomastic data. Proposals will be judged upon their thematic fit as well as their potential to make a substantive contribution to both forensic linguistics and onomastics. All interested authors are asked to submit their formal proposals using the following guidelines.

Proposal Submission Process

- Abstract proposals (max. 500 words, excluding the title and references) should be sent as a Word doc email attachment to the Editor-in-Chief of *NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics*, Professor I. M. Nick (nameseditor@gmail.com).
- For organizational purposes, proposals must include “FORENSICS” in the subject line of the email.
- All proposals must include an abstract, title, and a preliminary list of references.
- The full name(s) of the author(s) and their affiliation(s) must appear in the body of the email. These details should NOT appear in the attached proposal.
- In the case of multi-authored submissions, one person must be clearly designated as the primary contact.

cont'd p. 6

- The DEADLINE for proposal submissions is October 15, 2026. All proposals will be submitted to a double-blind review process. Authors will be notified about acceptance on or by November 15, 2026.
- Final chapters (max 7,000 words, excluding abstracts, graphics, and references) will be due March 15, 2027.

For further information about this call, please feel free to contact Professor I. M. Nick (nameseditor@gmail.com). We look forward to receiving your proposals!

Book Reviews: A Thank You and an Invitation

Thanks to all reviewers and readers for your continued interest in book reviews. With the evolution of journalism, book markets, and reading habits, there seem to be fewer opportunities to read reviews of fiction, poetry, memoirs, and popular literature. It's encouraging, then, to see the genre of scholarly book reviews retaining its place in the field.

NAMES has once again provided two reviews per issue for 74-1 and 74-2: one by Anne Anderson on names of the elements, one by our Editor in Chief Iman Nick on the names of children at Auschwitz, and two on botanical names (an unexpected but happy coincidence) by Michel Nguessan and me.

New titles will appear for you in 74-3 and 74-4, where you will find the work of some familiar returning reviewers and some new colleagues joining us.

If you would like to be one of those new reviewer-colleagues, please let me know at cdevinne@gannon.edu. And please continue sending suggestions of new titles to review.

Christine De Vinne
Book Review Editor

Call for Book Proposals

Proposals are now being accepted for multi-authored volumes to appear in the Bloomsbury book series, "Names and Naming in the Social Sciences and Humanities." All areas of onomastic research are welcome.

Interested contributors are encouraged to contact Series Editor, Professor I. M. Nick for more details.

Adrian Koopman: A Pillar of African Names Scholarship Passes

Professor Emeritus Adrian Koopman was a towering figure in the landscape of African onomastics.¹ Alongside fellow luminaries of African name studies—including J.T. Botha, J.U. Jacobs, E.R. Jenkins, Nhlanhla Mathonsi, B.A. Meiring, Lucie Möller, Bertie Neethling, Sihawukele Ngubane, Charles Pfukwa, Theo du Plessis, Peter Raper, Noleen Turner, and Thenjiwe Meyiwa—he played an instrumental role in the foundational development of both the Names Society of Southern Africa (NSSA) and its official flagship journal, *Nomina Africana: Journal of African Onomastics*.

cont'd p. 7

Starting with the inaugural formation of the NSSA in 1981, Adrian remained a steadfast presence, attending every biennial conference for over four decades until health challenges intervened.

His commitment to the institutional leadership of onomastics in Africa was profound. Adrian served the NSSA President. His impact on *Nomina Africana* was equally decisive. After serving on its editorial boards and committees between 1987 and 2002, he assumed the role of Editor-in-Chief from 2002 to 2016. Following his editorial tenure as, he continued to offer his scholarly counsel as an Editorial Board member until his passing. It is virtually impossible to recount the modern trajectory of *Nomina Africana* without Adrian's monumental contributions.

Beyond his own personal academic output,² he was a generous mentor to generations of scholars. Throughout his life, he remained passionately devoted to nurturing emerging African onomasticians and expanding the discipline across higher education institutions throughout the continent. As a result, his intellectual footprint endures in the research, methodologies, and academic programs that flourish across Africa.³ May his legacy continue to inspire African onomastics and the scholars who carry it forward.

by Sambulo Ndlovu, Editor-in-Chief, *Nomina Africana: Journal of African Onomastics*

Endnotes

1. Emeritus Professor of the University of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa, Professor Koopman also served on the Executive of the ICOS and ICOS Vice-President from 2008 to 2010.
2. Professor Koopman authored more than 50 articles and chapters in scholarly journals and academic books.
3. Among his many book publications are *Birds of KwaZulu-Natal and Their Zulu Names* (ISBN-10: 1920602062); *Zulu Plant Names* (ISBN-10: 1869142810); and *South African Bird Names through Time, Language and Usage* (ISBN-10: 1041332017).

2026 ANS Executive Council



DR. BRANDON SIMONSON

President
Boston University (USA)
simonson@bu.edu



DR. STAR MEDZERIAN VANGURI

Secretary
Nova Southeastern University (USA)
sm1850@nova.edu



DR. ANNE ANDERSON

Allied Conference Coordinator,
Independent Researcher/Scholar (USA)
awanderson.editing@gmail.com



DR. SAUNDRA WRIGHT

Treasurer
California State University, Chico (USA)
skwright@csuchico.edu



DR. SHARON N. OBASI

Membership Officer, Place Names SIG Coordinator
University of Nebraska at Kearney (USA)
obasis2@unk.edu

2026 ANS Executive Council, cont.



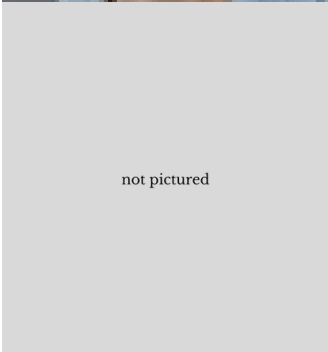
PROFESSOR I.M. NICK

Editor-in-Chief of *NAMES: A Journal of Onomastics*
Germanic Society for Forensic Linguistics (Germany)
nameseditor@gmail.com



DR. CHRISTINE DE VINNE

Book Review Editor of *Names: A Journal of Onomastics*
Gannon University (USA)
cdevinne@gannon.edu



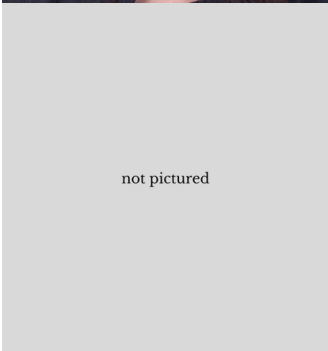
DR. T.K. ALPHEY

Information Officer
University of Oxford (UK)
tristan.alphey@gmail.com



MS. LAUREL SUTTON

Coordinator of the Name of the Year Election, Immediate
Past President
Catchword Branding (USA)
laurelasutton@gmail.com



DR. DAVID WADE

Member-at-Large, 2025-2027
Wade Research Foundation (USA)
wade-research@hotmail.com

2025 ANS Executive Council, cont.

not pictured

DR. REBEKAH INGRAM

Member-at-Large, 2025-2027
Carleton University (Canada)
RebekahIngram@cunet.carleton.ca



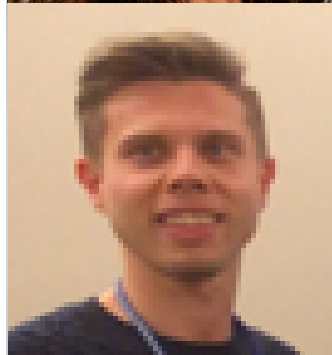
DR. TERHI AINALA

Member-at-Large, 2025-2027
University of Helsinki (Finland)
terhi.ainiala@helsinki.fi



DR. MARYANN PARADA

Personal Names SIG
California State University, Bakersfield (USA)
maryannparada@gmail.com



DR. MIRKO CASAGRANDA

Trade Names SIG
University of Calabria (Italy)
mirko.casagranda@unical.it



DR. SUSAN BEHRENS

Literary Names SIG
Marymount Manhattan College (USA)
sbehrens@mmm.edu