

A M E R I C A N F O L K L O R E

A N E N C Y C L O P E D I A



Edited by JAN HAROLD BRUNVAND

American Folklore

Garland Reference Library of the Humanities (Vol. 1551)

Advisory Board

Robert A. Georges

Professor Emeritus of English and Folklore
University of California-Los Angeles

James P. Leary

Faculty Associate in the Folklore Program
University of Wisconsin

W.K. McNeil

Folklorist at The Ozark Folk Center
Mountain View, Arkansas

John Michael Vlach

Professor of American Studies and Anthropology
Director of the Folklife Program
The George Washington University

Marta Weigle

Professor of Anthropology
University Regents Professor
University of New Mexico

Rosemary Lévy Zumwalt

Associate Professor of Anthropology
Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Davidson College

American Folklore

An Encyclopedia

Edited by

Jan Harold Brunvand

Garland Publishing, Inc. New York & London, 1996

This edition published in the Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2006.
“To purchase your own copy of this or any of Taylor & Francis or Routledge’s collection of
thousands of eBooks please go to <http://www.ebookstore.tandf.co.uk/>.”

Copyright © 1996 by Jan Harold Brunvand

All rights reserved

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data American folklore: an encyclopedia/edited
by Jan Harold Brunvand. p. cm.—(Garland reference library of the humanities; vol. 1551)
Originally published: 1996. Includes bibliographical references and index. ISBN 0-8153-3350-1
(pbk.: alk. paper) 1. Folklore—North America—Encyclopedias. 2. North America— Social life
and customs—Encyclopedias. I. Brunvand, Jan Harold. II. Series. GR101.A54 1998
398'.0973'03—dc21 98-38863 CIP

Cover photo: Henry Ossawa Tanner’s “The Banjo Lesson.” Courtesy Hampton University
Museum, Hampton, Virginia.

Cover design by Lawrence Wolfson Design, NY. Picture research by Jacob Love. Cover research
by Marjorie Trenk.

ISBN 0-203-30622-8 Master e-book ISBN

ISBN 0-8153-3350-1 (Print Edition)

Contents

Preface	vii
Standard Folklore Indexes and Classifications	x
Contributors	xii
The Encyclopedia	1
Index	1589

Preface

This volume is a comprehensive general reference work intended for scholars, students, writers, and the general public on “American folklore,” which is defined here as North American folklore, including Canadian but excluding, except for a few general topics, the folklore of Native Americans, which will be covered in its own encyclopedia. However, under many topics—immigrant folklore, African American folklore, occupational folklore, genres of folklore—reference to areas outside the United States and Canada was inevitable.

In 1930, Alexander H. Krappe called American folklore “a bad misnomer,” asserting that there existed “only European (or African, or Far Eastern) folklore on the American continent.” More usefully, in 1978, Richard M. Dorson distinguished between “Folklore in America” and “American Folklore,” repeating the call that he had sounded decades before for more attention by folklorists to “the background of American history, with its unique circumstances and environment” and to both the adaptations of older folklore and the creation of new folklore against this historical background. The present encyclopedia affirms that “American folklore” indeed does exist, and it includes in its scope both the older adapted themes and the newer original ones developed within the larger cultural matrix of American history.

The qualifier “American” should be understood in the titles of all of the extensive entries gathered here for folklore genres, folk groups, scholarly approaches, general topics, folk performers, and folklorists. For the latter category—folklore scholars—only those people whose life work has been completed have been included. Living folklorists are not represented. For folk performers, this living-person rule was not applied, although a close association of each performer's work with genuine folk tradition was required. The range of general topics covered runs from traditional areas like folklore scholarship, film and folklore, history and folklore, mass media and folklore, parody in folklore, and public folklore to such leading-edge topics as bodylore, coding in American folk culture, cultural studies, computer folklore, empowerment, organizational folklore, and postmodernism.

Readers interested in a survey of scholarly approaches to American folklore might begin by reading the entries AMERICAN FOLKLORE SCHOLARSHIP: THE EARLY YEARS, CANADIAN FOLKLORE, ETHICS IN FOLKLORE RESEARCH, FIELDWORK, FOLKLIFE MOVEMENT, and MATERIAL CULTURE before turning to the specific “approaches” topics: ANTHROPOLOGICAL, COMPARATIVE, CONTEXTUAL, FEMINIST, FUNCTIONALISM, MARXIST, ORAL-FORMULAIC, PSYCHOLOGY OF FOLKLORE, SEMIOTIC, SOCIOLOGICAL, and STRUCTURAL. Similarly, one might read the general entry REGIONAL FOLKLORE before consulting the specific regional articles: NEW ENGLAND, MIDDLE ATLANTIC, ADIRONDACKS, APPALACHIA, PIEDMONT, MIDWEST, GREAT PLAINS, SOUTH, OZARKS, SOUTHWEST, ROCKY MOUNTAINS, NORTHWEST COAST

AND ALASKA, AND GREAT BASIN. Or the general entries ETHNIC FOLKLORE and IMMIGRANT FOLKLORE, STUDY OF, could be read first as an introduction to the entries on ethnic and immigrant groups: AFRICAN, BALTIC, BASQUE, CAJUNS, CHINESE, DUTCH, FILIPINO, FINNISH, FRENCH, GERMAN, GREEK, GYPSIES, HUNGARIAN, IRISH, ITALIAN, JAPANESE, POLISH, ROMANIAN, SCANDINAVIAN, SCOTTISH, SLAVIC, UKRAINIAN, and WENDS.

Of course, every entry and its reference list is an independent entity worth consulting on its own merits, with no prior review of a general topic required. A “see also” line for most entries indicates cross-references to related topics.

The major American folklore genres and occupational folk groups have been included, insofar as reference material exists to document them, but we did not attempt to cover all minor genres, occupations, and hobbies that may have their own distinctive folklore. Thus, there are long essays on such genres as CUSTOM, FOLKSONG, FOLKTALE, GAMES, MYTH, PROVERBS, RIDDLES AND PUZZLES, and SUPERSTITION, but shorter entries on such genres as ANECDOTE, ANTI-LEGEND, CADENCE CHANT, DOZENS, JACK TALES, MNEMONIC DEVICES, PRAYER, RECITATION, and SHIVAREE. Similarly for occupations, we have longer entries for COWBOYS, FARMERS, LOGGERS, RAILROADERS, STEELWORKERS, and the like, but shorter ones for groups like BIKERS, BIRDERS, LAWYERS, MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS, PRINTERS, and WATERMEN.

Readers will find all of the expected arts and crafts of American folk tradition represented here: BASKETMAKING, BLACKSMITHING, COSTUME, NEEDLEWORK, POTTERY, QUILT MAKING, WEAVING, WOOD CARVING, and so on, as well as some perhaps less familiar, like BOATBUILDING, PAPER CUTTING, TATTOOING, and the creations produced by “outsider artists.” In like manner, there are, predictably, entries on major musical forms, such as BALLAD, BLUEGRASS, BLUES, CHANTEYS, GOSPEL MUSIC, LULLABY, LYRIC SONG, PLAY-PARTY, SHAPE-NOTE SINGING, SPIRITUALS, and WORK SONG but also less-expected entries on such forms as *CONJUNTO* MUSIC, COUNTRY MUSIC, ELVIS, FILK Music, JAZZ, KLEZMER, RAP, and ZYDECO.

Each user of this volume, we hope, will find special surprises and pleasures in it. For his own part, the editor confesses to having a special affinity for the entries AUTOHARP, CATFISH, CON ARTIST, COW TIPPING, CURSING, FISHING (SPORT), NUCLEAR LORE, OUIJA, SHEEP CAMP, and UFO LORE, none of which were on the originally planned entry list but all of which yielded fascinating essays in the hands of the experts who wrote them.

American folklore is a large and diversified field with a long and proud tradition of scholarship devoted to its collection and interpretation. This encyclopedia is the first serious attempt to provide a detailed reference source on the field, based on the work of academic folklore specialists. The net was cast widely, but in the confines of a one-volume book much had to be summarized or even omitted. So, besides using the reference lists following many individual entries, the reader is urged to consult such general sources as the following.

General Reference Material

- Brunvand, Jan Harold. 1979. *Readings in American Folklore*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- . 1986. *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*. 3d. ed. New York: W.W.Norton.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1959. *American Folklore*. (Paperback ed. with revised bibliographical notes, 1977.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1964. *Buying the Wind: Regional Folklore in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1972. *Folklore and Folklife: An Introduction*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- . 1973. *America in Legend: Folklore from the Colonial Period to the Present*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- , ed. 1983. *Handbook of American Folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Dundes, Alan, ed. 1965. *The Study of Folklore*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.
- Flanagan, Cathleen C., and John T. 1977. *American Folklore: A Bibliography*. Metuchen: Scarecrow Press.
- Haywood, Charles. 1961. *A Bibliography of North American Folklore and Folksong*. 2d. rev. ed. New York: Dover Books.
- Leach, Maria, and Jerome Fried, eds. 1950. *Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*. (Rev. ed., 1972.)
- Oring, Elliott, ed. 1986. *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: An Introduction*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- . 1989. *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: A Reader*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Toelken, Barre. 1979. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Wilgus, D.K. 1959. *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship Since 1898*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Jan Harold Brunvand*

Standard Folklore Indexes and Classifications

The following are cited within entries in the short forms shown in brackets.

- Aarne, Antti, and Stith Thompson. 1964. *The Types of the Folktale: A Classification and Bibliography*. 2d. rev. ed. Folklore Fellows Communications, No. 184. [Cited as AT, Type, or Tale Type followed by the appropriate number.]
- Baughman, Ernest W. 1966. *Type and Motif-Index of the Folktales of England and North America*. Indiana University Folklore Series, No. 20. The Hague: Mouton. [Cited as Baughman Type or Baughman Motif followed by the appropriate letter or number.]
- Child, Francis James. [1882–1898] 1965. *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*. 5 vols. New York: Dover. [Cited as Child followed by the appropriate number, from 1 through 305.]
- Coffin, Tristram Potter. 1977. *American Balladry from British Broad-sides: A Guide for Students and Collectors of the Traditional Song*. American Folklore Society, Bibliographical and Special Series. Vol. 8. Philadelphia.
- Laws, G. Malcolm, Jr. 1957. *American Balladry from British Broad-sides: A Guide for Students and Collectors of Traditional Song*. American Folklore Society, Bibliographical and Special Series. Vol. 8. Philadelphia. [Cited as Laws followed by the letter J through Q followed by the appropriate number.]
- . 1964. *Native American Balladry: A Descriptive Guide and a Bibliographical Syllabus*. Rev. ed. American Folklore Society, Bibliographical and Special Series. Vol. 1. Philadelphia. [Cited as Laws followed by the letter A through I followed by the appropriate number.]
- Thompson, Stith. 1955–1958. *The Motif-Index of FolkLiterature*. Rev. ed. 6 vols. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. [Cited as Motif followed by the appropriate letter and numbers.]

Contributors

Barbara Allen
Independent Scholar
Cheyenne, WY

R.Gerald Alvey
Professor, Department of English
University of Kentucky

Phillis Alvic
Independent Scholar
Lexington, KY

Ruth E.Andersen
Independent Scholar
Austin, TX

John J.Appel
Adjunct Curator
Michigan State University Museum

John Ashton
Professor, Department of Folklore
Sir Wilfred Grenfell College
Canada

Louie Attebery
Professor, Department of English
Albertson College of Idaho

Ronald L.Baker
Chairperson and Professor of English
Indiana State University

Karen Baldwin
Director, ECU Folklore Archive
East Carolina University

Amanda Carson Banks
Library Development
Vanderbilt University

Thomas E. Barden
Director, American Studies Program
University of Toledo

Robert Baron
Folk Arts Program Director
New York State Council on the Arts

Peter Bartis
Folklife Specialist, American Folklife Center
Library of Congress

John Bealle
Independent Scholar
Cincinnati, OH

Stephen Dow Beckham
Pamplin Professor of History
Lewis & Clark College

Kristi A. Bell
Archivist, Brigham Young University Folklore Archive

Dan Ben-Amos
Professor of Folklore and Folklife
University of Pennsylvania

Richard J. Blaustein
Professor
East Tennessee State University

Betsy Bowden
Professor, Department of English
Rutgers University-Camden

Erika Brady
Associate Professor, Programs in Folk Studies
Western Kentucky University

Margaret K. Brady
Associate Professor, Department of English
University of Utah

C. Ray Brassieur
Oral Historian/Folklorist, State Historical Society of Missouri
University of Missouri-Columbia

Charles L. Briggs
Professor of Anthropology
Vassar College

Simon J. Bronner
Professor, American Studies Program
Pennsylvania State University-Harrisburg

David A. Brose
Manager, Folklore Program
John C. Campbell Folk School
Brasstown, NC

Peggy A. Bulger
Folk Arts Director
Southern Arts Federation
Atlanta, GA

Thomas E. Bullard
Independent Scholar
Bloomington, IN

Carol Burke
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor, School of Arts and
Sciences
Johns Hopkins University

Richard Allen Burns
Assistant Professor of English and Folklore
Arkansas State University

John A. Burrison
Professor, Department of English
Georgia State University

Anne Burson-Tolpin
Adjunct Instructor
Essex County College-West Essex Campus

Charles Camp
Maryland State Arts Council

Hal Cannon
Founding Director, Western Folklife Center
Elko, NV

Sue Spencer Cannon
Independent Scholar
Irvine, CA

Simon J.Carmel
Assistant Professor, Anthropologist, National Technical Institute for the Deaf
Rochester Institute of Technology

Carole H.Carpenter
Professor, Ontario Folklife Centre/ Humanities
York University
Canada

John Cash
Folklore Institute
Indiana University

Frances Cattermole-Tally
Independent Scholar
Los Angeles, CA

Vivien T.Y.Chen
Project Director, Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES)
Smithsonian Institution

Sally C. and Barry E.Childs-Helton
Independent Scholars
Indianapolis, IN

William M.Clements
Professor of English and Folklore
Arkansas State University

Janet M.Cliff
Independent Scholar
San Antonio, TX

Robert Cochran
Director, Center for Arkansas and Regional Studies
University of Arkansas

Tristram Potter Coffin
Independent Scholar
Wakefield, RI

John M.Coggeshall

Department of Sociology
Clemson University

David Steven Cohen
Senior Research Associate
New Jersey Historical Commission

Norm Cohen
Independent Scholar
Portland, OR

Kristin G. Congdon
Professor of Art
University of Central Florida

Cecelia Conway
Independent Scholar
Chapel Hill, NC

Kay Cothran Craigie
Independent Scholar
Paoli, PA

Daniel J. Crowley
Professor, Department of Anthropology
University of California-Davis

Keith Cunningham
Professor of English
Northern Arizona University

Larry Danielson
Professor and Chair, Intercultural and Folk Studies Department
Western Kentucky University

Frank de Caro
Professor, Department of English
Louisiana State University

Linda Dégh
Distinguished Professor of Folklore
Indiana University

Douglas DeNatale

Manager, Cultural Heritage and Technology
New England Foundation for the Arts
Boston, MA

C.Kurt Dewhurst
Director, Michigan State University Museum

Sandra K.Dolby
Professor, Folklore Institute
Indiana University

John Dorst
Professor, American Studies Program
University of Wyoming

William A.Douglass
Coordinator, Basque Studies Program
University of Nevada-Reno

Norine Dresser
Retired Faculty, now Independent Scholar
California State University-Los Angeles

Doris J.Dyen
Steel Industry Heritage Foundation
Homestead, PA

Brenda M.Eagles
Research Librarian, Center for the Study of Southern Culture
University of Mississippi

Eric Alden Eliason
Independent Scholar
Austin, TX

Bill Ellis
Associate Professor of English and American Studies
Pennsylvania State University-Hazleton

David G.Engle
Professor, Department of Foreign Languages and Literature
California State University-Fresno

David Evans
Professor of Music
University of Memphis

Barbara Fertig
Savannah History Museum
Savannah, GA

Alta Fife
Independent Scholar
Logan, UT

Gary Alan Fine
Professor of Sociology
University of Georgia

Elizabeth C.Fine
Associate Professor, Center for Interdisciplinary Studies and Department of
Communication Studies
Virginia Tech

John Miles Foley
W.H.Byler Professor of Classics and English
University of Missouri

Edith Fowke
Independent Scholar
Canada

Robert A.Georges
Professor Emeritus, Folklore and Mythology Program
University of California-Los Angeles

Angus Kress Gillespie
Associate Professor, American Studies Department
Rutgers University

Janet C.Gilmore
Independent Scholar
Mount Horeb, WI

Stephen D.Glazier
Professor of Anthropology
University of Nebraska

Christine Goldberg
Independent Scholar
Los Angeles, CA

Peter D.Goldsmith

Dean of First-Year Students and Adjunct Associate Professor of Anthropology
Dartmouth College

Joseph P. Goodwin
Assistant Director, Career Services
Ball State University

Andrea Graham
Director, Folk Arts Program
Nevada State Council on the Arts

Joe S. Graham
Chair, Department of Psychology and Sociology (Anthropology)
Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Stephen Green
Sound and Image Librarian
Southern Folklife and Historical Collections/Wilson Library
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

Pauline Greenhill
Associate Professor, Anthropology and Women's Studies
University of Winnipeg
Canada

Sylvia Grider
Department of Anthropology
Texas A&M University

Hanna Griff
Assistant Professor
Sanyo Gakuen University
Japan

James S. Griffith
Coordinator, Southwest Folklore Center
Special Collections Library
University of Arizona

John A. Gutowski
Professor, Department of English
Saint Xavier University

Sandra G. Hancock
Professor, Department of English
University of Tennessee

Judith Lynne Hanna
Senior Research Scholar
University of Maryland

Gregory Hansen
Associate Instructor
Indiana University

Ilana Harlow
The Folklore Institute
Indiana University

Joseph Harris
Professor, Department of English and American Literature
Harvard University

Phyllis A. Harrison
Executive Director, Life on the Sound
Tacoma, WA

Guy Haskell
Professor, Judaic and Near Eastern Studies
Oberlin College

Judith Haut
Independent Scholar
Topanga, CA

Elissa R. Henken
Associate Professor
University of Georgia

Jerrold Hirsch
Professor, Division of Social Science
Northeast Missouri State University

Maggie Holtzberg
Director, Folklife Program
Georgia Council for the Arts

Laurel Horton
Independent Scholar
Seneca, SC

Jim Hoy
Professor, Division of English
Emporia State University

Patrick Huber
Department of History
University of North Carolina

Mary Hufford
Folklife Specialist, American Folklife Center
Washington, DC

Linda A. Hughes
Visiting Assistant Professor
University of Delaware

Lin T. Humphrey
Independent Scholar
Claremont, CA

Ray Hyman
Professor, Department of Psychology
University of Oregon

Joyce Ice
Assistant Director, Museum of International Folk Art
Santa Fe, NM

Alan Jabbour
Director, American Folklife Center
Library of Congress

Bruce Jackson
SUNY Distinguished Professor
State University of New York-Buffalo

Timothy B. Jay
Professor of Psychology
North Adams State College
North Adams, MA

Paula J. Johnson
Maritime Specialist, National Museum of American History
Smithsonian Institution

Michael Owen Jones

Professor of Folklore and History
University of California-Los Angeles

Rosemary Joyce
Independent Scholar
Columbus, OH

Ed Kahn
Independent Scholar
Pinole, CA

Joann W.Kealiinohomoku
Independent Scholar
Cross-Cultural Dance Resources
Flagstaff, AZ

Kenneth B.Keppeler
Independent Scholar
Albuquerque, NM

Cheryl L.Keyes
Assistant Professor, Department of Ethnomusicology
University of California-Los Angeles

Sojin Kim
University of California-Los Angeles

Alana Paige Kimbel
Student Archivist, Brigham Young University Folklore Archive

James W.Kirkland
Professor, Department of English
East Carolina University

Barbro Klein
Associate Professor, Department of Ethnology
Stockholm University
Sweden

LuAnne Gaykowski Kozma
Assistant Curator of Folk Arts and 4-H Specialist
Michigan Traditional Arts Program
Michigan State University Museum

Miles Krassen

Professor, Judaic and Near Eastern Studies
Oberlin College

Elon Kulii
Professor, Department of English
North Carolina A&T University

Richard Kurin
Director, Center for Folklife Programs and Cultural Studies
Smithsonian Institution

Donald M.Lance
Professor Emeritus of English
University of Missouri

Janet Langlois
Professor, Department of English
Wayne State University

George E.Lankford
Bradley Professor in the Social Sciences
Lyon College

Jan Laude
Independent Scholar
Minneapolis, MN

John Laudun
The Folklore Institute
Indiana University

Monica Lawton
Lecturer
University of Pennsylvania

James P.Leary
Faculty Associate, Folklore Program
University of Wisconsin

Wendy Leeds-Hurwitz
Professor, Communication Department
University of Wisconsin-Parkside

William E.Lightfoot
Professor, Department of English
Appalachian State University

Jennifer Livesay
Independent Scholar
Bloomington, IN

Yvonne R.Lockwood
Michigan State University Museum

Michael A.Lofaro
Professor, Department of English
University of Tennessee

Guy Logsdon
Independent Scholar
Tulsa, OK

Terry L.Long
Professor
Ohio State University-Newark

Jens Lund
Independent Scholar
Olympia, WA

Michael Luster
Director, Louisiana Folklife Festival

Richard March
Wisconsin Arts Board

Howard Wight Marshall
Professor, Department of Art History and Archaeology
University of Missouri

Gail Matthews-DeNatale
Assistant Professor, Institute for Educational Transformation
George Mason University

Robert McCarl
Professor, Department of Anthropology
Boise State University

William Bernard McCarthy
Professor of English
Pennsylvania State University-DuBois

Margy McClain
Urban Traditions
Chicago, IL

Ellen McHale
Independent Scholar
Esperance, NY

W.K.McNeil
Folklorist, The Ozark Folk Center
Mountain View, AR

Jay Mechling
Professor, Department of American Studies
University of California-Davis

Bohdan Medwidsky
Professor, Slavic and East European Studies
University of Alberta
Canada

Herminia Q.Menez
Independent Scholar
Los Angeles, CA

Richard E.Meyer
Professor of English
Western Oregon State College

Wolfgang Mieder
Professor, Department of German and Russian
University of Vermont

Yvonne J.Milspaw
Associate Professor of English and Humanities
Harrisburg Area Community College

John Minton
Assistant Professor of Folklore
Indiana University-Purdue University-Fort Wayne

Roger Mitchell
Professor Emeritus, Anthropology
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

John F.Moe
Fulbright Professor of American Studies
University of Tampere
Finland

William Lynwood Montell
Professor, Programs in Folk Studies
Western Kentucky University

Eric L.Montenyohl
Independent Scholar
Cary, NC

John Morgan
Instructor in English
University of Missouri-Rolla

Linda Morley
Independent Scholar
Manchester, NH

Patrick B.Mullen
Professor, Department of English
Ohio State University

Peter Narváez
Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Canada

Bruno Netd
Professor, School of Music
University of Illinois

Elliott Oring
Professor, Department of Anthropology
California State University-Los Angeles

Blanton Owen
Independent Scholar
Carson City, NV

Beverly Bush Patterson
Folklife Specialist
North Carolina Arts Council

Deirdre M.Paulsen
Consultant, Honors and General Education
Brigham Young University

Barry Lee Pearson
Professor, Department of English
University of Maryland

Ron Pen
Professor, School of Music
University of Kentucky

Charles L.Perdue Jr.
Professor, Departments of Anthropology and English
University of Virginia

Burton W.Peretti
Professor, Department of History
Colorado College

Natalie Rainey-Peters
Independent Scholar
Havre de Grace, Maryland

Erskine Peters
Professor, Department of English
University of Notre Dame

Kenneth D.Pimple
Independent Scholar
Bloomington, IN

James Porter
Professor and Chair, Ethnomusicology, Folklore and Mythology
University of California-Los Angeles

Nolan Porterfield
Independent Scholar
Bowling Green, KY

Jennifer Post
Curator, Helen Hartness Flanders Ballad Collection, Starr Library
Middlebuivy College

Cathy Lynn Preston
Professor, Department of English
University of Colorado

Michael Preston
Professor, Department of English
University of Colorado

Leonard Norman Primiano
Professor, Department of Religion
Cabrine College

Marie Luise Proeller
Independent Scholar
New York, NY

Colin Quigley
Associate Professor, Department of World Arts and Cultures
University of California-Los Angeles

Joan Newlon Radner
Professor, Department of Literature
American University

John M.Ramsay
Retired Director of Recreation Extension at Berea College, now Independent Scholar
Berea, KY

Richard Raspa
Professor, Wayne State University
Detroit, MI

Robert M.Rennick
Independent Scholar
Prestonsburg, KY

Roger deV.Renwick
Associate Professor
University of Texas-Austin

W.Edson Richmond †
Professor Emeritus
Bloomington, IN

Warren E.Roberts
Professor Emeritus, Folklore Institute
Indiana University

Danielle M.Roemer
Associate Professor
Northern Kentucky University

Bruce A.Rosenberg
Professor, American Civilization
Brown University

Neil V.Rosenberg
Professor, Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Canada

Kent C.Ryden
Assistant Professor, American and New England Studies Program
University of Southern Maine

Lynn Moss Sanders
Professor, Department of English
Appalachian State University

Jack Santino
Professor of Folklore and Popular Culture
Bowling Green State University

Patricia Sawin
Department of English
University of Southwestern Louisiana

Elizabeth D.Schafer
Independent Scholar
Loachapoka, AL

John Schleppenbach
Professor, Department of Language, Literature, and Communication
Quincy University

Adolf E.Schroeder

Professor Emeritus, German Studies
University of Missouri-Columbia

Rebecca Schroeder
Editor, Missouri Folklore Society

Tom Schroeder
Independent Scholar
Kansas City, MO

Anthony Seeger
Curator, The Folkways Collection
Smithsonian Institution

Charlie Seemann
Program Associate, The Fund for Folk Culture
Santa Fe, NM

Sharon Sherman
Director of Folklore Program and Professor of English
University of Oregon

David P. Shuldiner
Adjunct Assistant Professor, School of Family Studies
University of Connecticut

Steve Siporin
Professor, Department of English
Utah State University

Guntis Šmidchens
Visiting Lecturer, Scandinavian Department
University of Washington

Moira Smith
Assistant Head of Reference for Instructional Services, Richter Library
University of Miami

Jean Haskell Speer
Director/Professor, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services
East Tennessee State University

David Stanley
Professor, Department of English
Westminster College of Salt Lake City

Shalom Staub
President, CEO, Institute for Cultural Partnerships
Harrisburg, PA

Polly Stewart
Professor, Department of English
Salisbury State University

Kay F. Stone
Professor, Department of English
University of Winnipeg
Canada

Ruth Stotter
Director, Certificate-In-Storytelling Program
Dominican College
San Rafael, CA

C.W. Sullivan III
Professor, Department of English
East Carolina University

Scott Hamilton Suter
Curator, Shenandoah Valley Folk Art and Heritage Center
Dayton, VA

Richard Sweterlitsch
Professor, Department of English
University of Vermont

Michael Taft
Adjunct Professor of Anthropology and Archaeology
University of Saskatchewan
Canada

Timothy Tangherlini
Professor, Scandinavian Section
University of California-Los Angeles

David A. Taylor
Folklife Specialist, American Folklife Center
Library of Congress

Monica Maria Tetzlaff
Assistant Professor
Indiana University-South Bend

Kenneth A.Thigpen
Associate Professor of English, Comparative Literature, and American Studies
Pennsylvania State University

Gerald Thomas
Professor, Department of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Canada

Jeff Todd Titon
Professor, Department of Music
Brown University

Barre Toelken
Professor and Director, Folklore Program
Utah State University

Peter Tokofsky
Professor, Folklore/Mythology Program
University of California-Los Angeles

Elizabeth Tucker
Associate Professor of English
Binghamton University

Richard W.Tucker
Professor, English as a Foreign Language
George Washington University

Tad Tuleja
Independent Scholar
Naples, NY

Patricia A.Turner
Professor, African American Studies
University of California-Davis

Rory P.B.Turner
Independent Scholar
Baltimore, MD

Diane Tye
Assistant Professor of Folklore
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Canada

John Michael Vlach
Professor and Director, Folklife Program
George Washington University

Eleanor Wachs
Commonwealth Folklife Association
Quincy, MA

Thomas Walker
Independent Scholar
St. Paul, MN

Robert E. Walls
Folklore Institute
Indiana University

Barry J. Ward
Professor, Department of English
West Virginia University

Don Ward
Professor Emeritus, Department of Germanic Languages
University of California-Los Angeles

K. Marianne Wargelin
Independent Scholar
Minneapolis, MN

Marta Weigle
Professor and Chair, Department of Anthropology
University of New Mexico

Rosemary Wells
Independent Scholar
Deerfield, IL

William Westerman
Coordinator, Program for Immigrant Traditional Artists
International Institute of New Jersey

Peter White
Professor, Department of English
University of New Mexico

Wm. H. Wiggins, Jr.
Professor, Afro-American Studies Program
Indiana University

Henry Willett
Director, Alabama Center for Traditional Culture

John Alexander Williams
Director, Center for Appalachian Studies
Appalachian State University

Clover Williams
Adjunct Professor
Indiana University

Kathryn E. Wilson
Lecturer
University of Pennsylvania

William A. Wilson
Humanities Professor of Literature and Folklore, and Director of Charles Redd Center for
Western Studies
Brigham Young University

Douglas Wixson
Professor of English, Emeritus
University of Missouri-Rolla

Daniel Wojcik
Assistant Professor, Folklore Program
University of Oregon

Charles Wolfe
Professor of English
Middle Tennessee State University

Charles Wukasch
Independent Scholar
Austin, TX

Donna L. Wyckoff
Lecturer, Department of English
Ohio State University

Sally M. Yerkovich

South Street Seaport Museum
New York, NY

Margaret Yocom
Associate Professor, Department of English
George Mason University

Katharine Young
Lecturer
University of California-Berkeley

Steve Zeitlin
Director, City Lore
New York, NY

Ed Zotti
Independent Scholar
Chicago, IL

Charles G.Zug III
Professor and Chair, Curriculum in Folklore
University of North Carolina

Rosemary Levy Zumwalt
Professor of Anthropology and Chair, Department of Anthropology and Sociology
Davidson College

American Folklore

A

Academe, Folklore of

Folk traditions of the college and university campus. The academic world consists of two principal subcultures—student and faculty—which, like all groups sharing common concerns over long periods of time, have developed constellations of folk belief, custom, folk speech, legend, jocular narrative, and ritual.

The most prevalent folk beliefs among university students (beyond the assumption that a college education leads to a job in “the real world”) fall into two arenas of potential anxiety: class attendance and examinations. In both contexts, certain excuses (such as “my grandmother is dying”) are believed to be more efficacious than others in obtaining pardon or permission for missing something for which the student has already paid. Virtually universal among American college students in their first two years of university work is the belief that there is a standard waiting period for a professor who does not arrive punctually. The most common system requires students to wait five minutes for an instructor, ten for an assistant professor, fifteen for an associate professor, and twenty for a full professor, although one also hears of ten minutes for a non-Ph.D., twenty for a Ph.D., fifteen for most faculty, all period if necessary for a full professor. This set of beliefs, like most folklore, is not learned from formal authority (indeed, such an obligation has yet to be found in the formal student rules of any American university), but from other members of the folk group: in this case, other students. University students in Germany, by contrast, routinely arrive in the classroom about fifteen minutes *after* the scheduled time, an acknowledged manipulation of time called *der akademische Viertel* (the academic quarter [hour]).

Students facing examinations, especially “finals,” try to affect their fortunes or their self-confidence by wearing lucky clothes (such as a shirt that was worn during a previous exam that was successful), carrying amulets, dolls, or special pens, hoping the exam falls on a lucky day (including the seventh, fourteenth, or twenty-first of the month), avoiding normal personal grooming (not combing hair, not shaving, or wearing “grubbies”), abstaining from sex (to conserve brain energy), and knocking loudly on the desk before starting the exam. While these observances may seem superficially to be either naive or simple matters of haste, they all fall into quite ancient categories of psychological tradition. In addition to the student’s own talents in the class, which are affected by a number of variables, and in response to the professor’s power in the class, which is believed to be wielded inconsistently, the anxious student can obtain confidence or magical help by utilizing a belief system that has been in existence for hundreds of years. In a similar way, members of hazardous occupations (like deep-sea fishermen and

firefighters) adopt the beliefs and customs passed on by several generations of coworkers, thus availing themselves of an accumulation of experience, know-how, and psychological aids that they do not have time to discover on their own before being in danger.

Student customs extend far beyond the issues of academic anxiety, however. Collectors of student folklore have noted extensive drinking games (“Cardinal Puff,” “Fuzz-Buzz”), theme parties, engagement and marriage rituals (passing a candle around a group of sorority women to announce an engagement), clothing and personal-decoration variations (especially at sports events and at graduation), and the use of obscene songs as unofficial expressions of membership in clubs, fraternities, sororities, and sports teams (especially rugby). At Utah State University (formerly an agricultural college), a student becomes a True Aggie by standing on a small concrete monument formed in the shape of an A and being kissed by someone who is already a True Aggie, at midnight, while the bell in nearby Old Main tolls the hour, preferably on a full moon, and preferably on Homecoming Saturday. It is rumored that another more complex and private ritual produces a “True Blue Aggie,” but its details have remained in the dark. At other universities, gates, statues, and fountains are the focal points of similar rituals and observances.

The folk speech of university students abounds with terms that mark the users as insiders: “cutting” or “sluffing” for intentionally missing a class, “cramming” for earnest studying, “Mickey” or “Mickey Mouse” to describe an easy course, “ballbuster” for a difficult course, “brown-nose” for a teacher’s pet. Terms like “comps,” “finals,” “defense,” “How much of a load are you carrying?” “What’s your GPA?” and the like are readily understood on campus but are usually unintelligible to anyone not a part of the academic group.

Academic legends (stories told as true, but not by someone who was an eyewitness) recall prudish deans of the 1950s who prohibited red dresses and patent leather shoes (responding to overzealous interpretations of *in loco parentis*), obscene or crazy comments by professors in their classes, epic pranks (like the dead horse in the fraternity cellar), and spectacular feats of cheating on final examinations. Professorial arrogance is parodied in the legend of the lecturer who notices most of his students using tape recorders so they won’t have to take notes; he responds by sending a graduate assistant to play tapes to them so he will not have to lecture. An absentminded biology professor, getting ready to dissect a frog, pulls out of his backpack the sandwich he thought he ate at lunch. Students playing recordings backward discover satanic messages or hypnotic orders that lead them to suicide (in joking response, other students claim to have played a record of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir backward, obtaining twenty new recipes for Jello salad).

Pranks are another important genre of academic folklore, though it is not always clear whether the pranks actually are carried out, or if they are simply parts of the oral traditions of campus groups. One hears about well-fed cows being left overnight in the offices of unpopular professors and about the dean’s car being taken apart and reassembled on the roof of the administration building, but it is easier to find avid narrators than eyewitnesses to these events. Modern legends of student hackers gaining access to academic records and changing friends’ grades are matched by newspaper accounts of people who have been caught doing it.

Faculty folklore focuses more on the humor, irony, and occasional disappointments in the life behind the lectern than it does on anxiety and fun. Although there are some jokes about students—like the young woman who says she will “do anything” for a grade and is then told by the professor to try studying, or the joke about the student who almost chokes to death trying to swallow his “crib notes” at an examination—professorial traditions complain about the devices used for cheating on exams, the range of excuses given for being absent (it is noted cynically that final examination week is extremely dangerous for the elderly, since so many grandmothers die then), and the unwillingness of students to learn (teaching is characterized as “casting fake pearls before real swine”).

As much as anything, faculty members both instigate and utilize much of the folklore circulating among their students, very likely because they were also students in a previous life. When a professor is late for class, she can be sure that the students will wait for at least ten minutes before daring to leave. If a professor wants to intimidate or astound the students, he can quote from tradition, as when a University of Oregon English professor asked the women in his Milton class to cross their legs so that the gates of Hell would be closed when they discussed *Paradise Lost*, using a legend he had heard at his own alma mater when he was a student. A music professor at the University of Utah waited until the critical moment (was it twenty minutes?) when his students were about to leave the room, then ceremoniously stepped out of the grand piano while beginning his initial lecture.

Folklore is not found only among the backward, illiterate, and uninformed; it is a vital expressive component in the lives of all ongoing human groups. Academic folklore is a dynamic illustration of the ways in which folklore functions for modern, well-educated, upwardly mobile people whose occupational context places them under particular strains and concerns that are well articulated on the vernacular level.

Barre Toelken

References

- Bronner, Simon. 1990. *Piled Higher and Deeper: The Folklore of Campus Life*. Little Rock, AR: August House.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1959. The Folklore of College Students. In *American Folklore*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 254–267.
- Toelken, Barre. 1986. The Folklore of Academe. In Jan Harold Brunvand, 3d ed. *The Study of American Folklore: An Introduction*, New York: W.W.Norton, pp. 502–528.

Academic Programs in Folklore

Folklore programs in the United States and Canada. Folklore courses were introduced at several North American universities in the 1920s and 1930s, and in 1940 Ralph Steele Boggs established the first degree-granting program in folklore, at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which remains a center for the study of folklore. Awarding both an M.A. degree and a doctoral minor, the curriculum in folklore at North Carolina is designed primarily for graduate students, though undergraduates may create an interdisciplinary degree with a concentration in folklore. Supported by several research collections—including D.K. Wilgus' papers, Archie Green's labor-song collection, the Southern Folklife Collection, the John Edwards Memorial Collection, the American Religious Tunebook Collection, and the Southern Historical Collection—the North Carolina program is especially strong in folksong and Southern folklife studies. Other emphases include African American folklore, ethnographic filmmaking, public-sector folklore, and occupational folklore.

The first Folklore Department in an American college or university was established at Franklin and Marshall University in 1948 by Alfred L. Shoemaker, assistant professor of American folklore. Although called the Department of American Folklore, the program was influenced by European folklife concepts and emphasized the study of Pennsylvania folklore and folklife. Franklin and Marshall's short-lived Folklore Department first appeared in the catalog for 1949–1950 but remained in it only two years. By 1995, Franklin and Marshall offered only a single folklore course, and in the United States only Indiana University and the University of Pennsylvania had Folklore Departments.

Stith Thompson joined the English faculty at Indiana University as director of freshman composition in 1921 and introduced the first folklore course there in 1923. After directing several M.A. theses and doctoral dissertations in folklore for graduate students majoring in English, Thompson established the first American Ph.D. program in folklore, at Indiana in 1949. After Thompson's retirement in 1955, his successor, Richard M. Dorson, guided an expanded folklore program of courses and faculty to departmental status in 1963. Under Thompson's direction, the program emphasized the comparative study of international folktales. Dorson continued to stress coverage of major international cultural areas in the curriculum, but, trained in the history of American civilization, he also added an Americanist orientation to the program. Warren E. Roberts, in 1953 the recipient of the first American doctorate in folklore, introduced a course in traditional arts, crafts, and architecture in 1961 and contributed to widening the range of the Indiana program, which emphasizes theoretical approaches in covering the entire field of folklore studies. An ethnomusicology program within the Department of Folklore and an Archives of Traditional Music strengthen the B.A. program as well as the M.A. and Ph.D. programs in folklore.

The second doctoral program in folklore was established in 1959, at the University of Pennsylvania, by Mac-Edward Leach. Leach remained on the English faculty at Penn after receiving a Ph.D. in Middle English literature there in 1930 and changed two

literature courses into a general folklore course and a ballad course. Penn's interdisciplinary graduate program in folklore first emphasized studies in ballads and folksongs and in folklore and literary relations, but by the time Leach retired in 1966, Penn had a comprehensive program covering the entire range of folklore studies. Influenced by sociolinguistic approaches and the ethnography of communication, the Department of Folklore and Folklife, offering an undergraduate degree and an M.A. in folklore as well as a doctorate, stresses social-scientific approaches to folklore.

Another major center of folklore studies is the folklore and mythology program at the University of California at Los Angeles, where Sigurd B. Hustvedt introduced a graduate course in the traditional ballad in 1933. Wayland D. Hand joined the German faculty in 1937, introduced a general folklore course in 1939, and established an interdepartmental folklore program in 1954. By 1995, UCLA's folklore and mythology program offered more than seventy-five courses, either directly or in conjunction with cooperating departments throughout the university, and awarded interdisciplinary master's and doctoral degrees in folklore and mythology. A research institute, the Center for the Study of Comparative Folklore and Mythology, and other university research centers strengthen UCLA's academic program.

An M.A. in folklore is offered in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California at Berkeley, and an M.A. in folk arts is offered through the Tamburitzans Institute of Folk Arts in the School of Music at Duquesne University. Western Kentucky's program in folk studies, housed in the Department of Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies, offers an undergraduate minor as well as an M.A. degree in folk studies. In Canada, Memorial University of Newfoundland and Université Laval have folklore programs, both awarding doctoral, master's, and undergraduate degrees in folklore. In 1962 Herbert Halpert joined the faculty of Memorial and, encouraged and supported by E.R. Seary, professor and head of the Department of English and place-names scholar, developed a folklore program within the Department of English. In 1968 Halpert established a Department of Folklore that offers a complete line of folklore courses. Three archives support the teaching mission: the *Centre d'études franco-terreneuviennes*, the Centre for Material Culture Studies, and the Folklore and Language Archive. Université Laval, with folklore studies dating from 1944 when Luc Lacourcière was appointed to a chair in folklore, offers undergraduate and graduate degrees in folklore, with emphasis on French folklore in North America, through its *programmes d'arts et traditions populaires* in the *Département d'Histoire*.

Two institutions without formal graduate programs in folklore, Pitzer College and Harvard University, offer B.A. degrees in folklore. Folklore studies at Harvard date from 1856 when Francis James Child began collecting English and Scottish folk ballads from books, broadsides, and manuscripts. Child did not develop separate folklore courses or a folklore program, but he incorporated folklore in his English courses and trained several notable American folklorists, including George Lyman Kittredge, successor to Child's English professorship in 1894. Harvard became the center for the literary study of folklore in North America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and the interest in folklore at Harvard was maintained in the 1930s by a group of Americanists, who promoted an interdisciplinary study of American culture to include folk and popular cultures as well as formal culture, and by Milman Parry and Albert Bates Lord, who initiated field research in European oral epics. Harvard remains a center for the

comparative study of folklore, because graduate studies in oral literature in allied areas complement Harvard's undergraduate degree program in folklore and mythology, awarded through its Committee on Degrees in Folklore and Mythology.

Over eighty North American colleges and universities offer majors in other disciplines (notably English, anthropology, and American studies) that permit a folklore minor or concentration. These programs range from formal curricula to informal concentrations at all degree levels. For example, an M.A. and a Ph.D. in anthropology or English with a folklore concentration is offered at the University of Texas at Austin. Undergraduate majors as well as graduate majors in anthropology at Texas A&M University also may elect a concentration in folklore. Degrees in folklore at the University of Oregon are coordinated through its folklore and ethnic studies program, in which master's students create their own program of study through an individualized program and doctoral students in English or anthropology may elect folklore as an area of concentration. Through its program in folklore, mythology, and film studies, the State University of New York at Buffalo awards an M.A. in English or humanities and a Ph.D. in English with a folklore and mythology concentration. A concentration in folklore also is available in the Department of Performance Studies at New York University.

George Washington University's folklife program grants an M.A. in American studies or anthropology and a Ph.D. in American studies with a concentration in traditional material culture—a program that takes advantage of the resources of the Smithsonian Institution, the American Folklife Center, and other museums, libraries, archives, and historical societies in the Washington, DC, area. The folklore program at Utah State University is administered through the American studies program, and undergraduate and master's degrees in American studies with a folklore emphasis are offered. Folklore concentrations also are available to history or English majors at Utah State. Master's candidates may elect areas in general folklore, public folklore, or applied history/museology. Ohio State University has offered folklore courses since the 1930s and has a Center for Folklore and Cultural Studies, allowing undergraduate and graduate students a folklore concentration in an interdisciplinary program, which emphasizes folklore and literary relations and narrative theory.

The academic study of folklore has made considerable progress since Boggs established the first folklore program in 1940, but few degree-granting programs in folklore have developed. Most folklore courses are taught in departments other than folklore, typically in English and anthropology departments or in American studies programs in the United States and in anthropology and history departments in Canada.

Ronald L. Baker

References

- Baker, Ronald L. 1771. Folklore Courses and Programs in American Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* 84:221–229.
- . 1778. The Study of Folklore in American Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* 91:792–807.
- . 1986. Folklore and Folklife Studies in American and Canadian Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* 99:50–74.

- . 1988. The Folklorist in the Academy. In *One Hundred Years of American Folklore Studies*, ed. William M. Clements, pp. 65–69. Washington, DC: American Folklore Society.
- Boggs, Ralph Steele. 1940. Folklore in University Curricula in the United States. *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 4:93–109.
- Bronner, Simon. 1991. A Prophetic Vision of Public and Academic Folklife: Alfred Shoemaker and America's First Department of Folklore. *Folklore Historian* 8:38–55.
- Bynum, David E. 1974. Child's Legacy Enlarged: Oral Literary Studies at Harvard since 1856. In *Four Generations of Oral Literary Studies at Harvard University*. Publications of the Milman Parry Collection. Cambridge: Center for the Study of Oral Literature, Harvard University.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1950. The Growth of Folklore Courses. *Journal of American Folklore* 63:345–359.
- . 1972. The Academic Future of Folklore. In *Folklore: Selected Essays*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp. 295–304.
- Leach, MacEdward. 1958. Folklore in American Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* (Supplement): 10–11.
- See also* American Studies and Folklore; Canadian Folklore Scholarship; Canadian Studies and Folklore; Folklife Movement; Material Culture

Adirondacks

A five-million acre, mountainous region in northeastern New York, bounded on the north by the Canadian border, on the east by Lake Champlain, on the south by the Mohawk River Valley, and on the west by the Saint Lawrence and Black River Valleys. The Adirondack Mountains constitute part of the Canadian Shield and are not, as popularly perceived, a part of the Appalachian Mountains. About half of the 5,177 square miles is a state forest preserve; much of the area has been designated a state park since 1892, thus limiting development. To many New Yorkers, the region is simply referred to as the “North Country.”

The term “Adirondack” is a lexicographer’s nightmare. Authorities offer a variety of translations. It is said to be (1) Iroquois for “They of the Great Rock,” referring to a tribe of Indians who once lived along the Saint Lawrence River; (2) a Mohawk generic name for the French and the English; or (3) Mohawk for “tree-eaters,” the derisive term that Mohawks, or Iroquois as the French called them, used to describe their enemy, the Algonquins. Before European contact, both tribes vied for control of the region because its forests and numerous lakes and streams provided a good source for meat and furs. Trails crisscrossed the region linking its numerous lakes and also to the Saint Lawrence, but there is little evidence of any Native American permanent settlements beyond seasonal camps.

European contact is generally dated from 1609, when the French explorer Samuel de Champlain accompanied an Algonquin war party on its way to attack an Iroquois village on what eventually became known as Lake George. Later in the same century, French and Dutch trappers from Montreal and Albany forayed into the region, but they did not establish permanent communities.

After the American Revolution, however, Vermonters, in particular, and other New Englanders, many of whom received land as payment for their military service, settled around the edges of the Adirondacks. Shortly thereafter, toward the end of the 18th century, logging in the eastern Adirondack region, along the headwaters of the Hudson River, stimulated settlement and development.

The southern Adirondack region would experience growth from a different source. By the late 1810s, tourists from New York City and Boston discovered the recreational value of the Adirondacks. The mineral waters found near Saratoga Springs drew crowds desiring to bathe in and drink the radioactive mineral waters, believing that the natural springs offered cures for numerous ailments. Equally alluring were fishing and hunting within the Adirondack Mountains. The pursuit of health and outdoor recreation provided the bases for a tourist industry that shaped much of the development and settlement patterns in the southern Adirondacks. By the 1840s and 1850s, hotels and rustic “camps” had sprung up throughout the southern Adirondack region. The growth mushroomed so quickly that shortly after the Civil War conservationists banded together in efforts to protect the tourist industry from logging interests that were encroaching from the northern Adirondacks. The heyday of tourism spanned more than three decades, from

1875 to 1910. In 1900, for example, a quarter of a million people visited the Adirondacks in the summer months alone. Many of these either rented camps, stayed in luxurious hotels, or vacationed in their own camp.

In the late 1870s, the area around Saranac Lake began to be touted for its healthy air. Medical doctors recommended extended stays in the region for the treatment of tuberculosis and other lung diseases. Numerous sanatoriums were constructed around the village, drawing thousands of famous and obscure patients, all seeking to breathe the curing Adirondack air.

Out of the tourist industry developed a folk tradition centering on the exploits and heroism of the Adirondack guide. The earliest guides, such as Sabael (ca. 1749–1855) or Mitchell Sabattis (1801–1906) were Abenakis. Local lore and some ethnographic research attributes Native Americans living in the region with producing both the Adirondack guide canoe and the Adirondack packbasket, two important items of Adirondack material culture that are rooted in Abenaki tradition. Eventually, Native American guides were replaced by White guides, some of whom were originally loggers or trappers. Other guides claimed to lead the life of outdoor hermits who spent their entire lives exploring the peaks and rivers of the region. Familiarity with the backwoods country allowed the guides to lead city tourists deep into the Adirondack forests on camping, hunting, mountain climbing, and fishing trips. The 19th-century Romantic impulse of educated city folk to touch the primordial world was adequately served by these guides. In some cases, these stalwart outdoorsman took on the additional responsibility of camping throughout the winter in a tent or an isolated camp helping a tubercular-ridden invalid strengthen his or her lungs and physical stamina, hoping to overcome the dreaded disease.

Popular narratives of the day described how these mountainmen-guides entertained their guests with outlandish tales about their marksmanship and hunting skills. Folk tradition continues to keep alive the memory of Native American and White guides, including among the latter the famous guide Mart Moody (1833–1910). Tales about his outdoor skills and eccentricities are shared among visitors and natives, and they have found their way into local literature, becoming part of the regional lore. The oral traditions about the older guides have become part of the narrative repertory of contemporary guides, and, in some instances, the older tales are even retold in the first person by the present generation of guides.

Despite the surge in tourism and health industries in the second half of 19th century, the interior of the Adirondacks remained largely unexplored. Accurate maps of the whole region were not available until the 1890s. It remained for the Gilded Age a wilderness, a place of mystery that offered potential adventures in uncharted regions. While popular urban icons of the age such as Diamond Jim Brady and Lillian Russell spent their time at the racetrack and spas in Saratoga, only a few miles away an area lay untouched that offered the more adventurous the thrill of visiting an uncharted wilderness.

The northern and western borderlands of the Adirondacks are marked with a very different history of settlement and development. Logging stimulated movement into the region. Vast tracts of pine and hardwood had attracted Canadian lumber interests as early as the mid-18th century when French Canadian loggers harvested the forests along the northwestern fringes of the Adirondacks and floated logs north to the Saint Lawrence River and Montreal. The work was handlabor intensive, but the promise of a job lured

many French Canadian lumbermen and lumberjacks to settle along with their families in the northern and western edges of the Adirondack region. As the industry moved deeper into the mountains in search of more timber, the workers and their families followed, gradually establishing small communities along the rivers and edges of the many lakes. There they cut white pine and either sawed it into timber to be transported south on railroad spurs or floated the logs north to the Saint Lawrence, where they became part of the Canadian market. Despite the efforts of conservationists to block logging throughout the Adirondacks, intensive commercial logging swept across the region. By the early 20th century, logging and several major forest fires had depleted the virgin forests, but many of the workers stayed behind, working in much smaller logging operations that harvested a second growth.

Small communities scattered throughout the region developed chiefly in response to logging, although a few sprung up where there were small-scale iron- or lead-mining interests. The Lake Placid-Lake George-Lake Saranac region developed a skiing industry and has hosted the Winter Olympics on two occasions. Along the western foothills of the Adirondacks, dairy farming emerged as the major industry. In some parts of the region, potato farming, fruit growing and other small cash crop farming developed. The central region, dotted by very small communities, continues for the most part to cater to tourists.

Folklore for the entire Adirondack region has never been comprehensively and systematically collected, although independent researchers have published a moderate range of material about specific counties or occupations in the Adirondacks. These studies suggest that a rich lode of folk traditions might be found in the region.

Native American material is sparsely represented in any collections and appears most frequently in older, uncritical publications. Hoping to appeal to the interests of tourists, some published accounts of local history contain examples of folk speech, proverbs, or tales about eccentric characters and bizarre occurrences. Personal narratives about roughing it in the woods appear alongside traditional tall tales describing the struggles to survive the onslaught of hordes of black flies and voracious mosquitoes or accounts of the superhuman skills of hunters. Along the eastern Adirondacks that border Lake Champlain, 19th-century eyewitness reports, publicized by local tourist interests, provide a historical setting for Lake Champlain monster sightings, a tradition that continues to intrigue tourists and local citizens. Other popularizers have sought to create belief in a Bigfoot-like creature living in the remote recesses of the Adirondacks.

Ethnic humor about the perceived idiosyncracies of French Canadians are commonly told by Adirondack folk. "Canucks" worked in the woods, and their difficulties with the language and the local customs of the dominant Anglo American culture provided situations for local humor and dialect tales. Even in the late 20th century, humor about the French Canadian shoppers and their efforts to avoid paying duty on items purchased in the States constitutes a viable theme in Adirondack and border humor.

The richest body of lore yet tapped in the Adirondacks is from the region's robust logging traditions. The oral recollections of the modern loggers and of the older native population in general are rich in both grass-roots history and folklore of logging. Personal-experience tales mix with traditional tall-tale motifs; the old lifestyles in the logging camps are recalled with nostalgia. Idioms of folk speech still spice the conversations of the men who spent much of their early life working in the bush and living in the camps. With ease, they can recall how, in the evenings, as the exhausted

loggers gathered in the “doghouse” (the center of the bunkhouse), the loaders, road hogs, teamsters, and jacks pushed aside their “turkeys” (tightly rolled bundles of clothes) and sat down on “deacon’s benches” to swap lies.

Especially prized are tales about the prodigious strength and extraordinary skills of lumberjacks, about marvelous rescues from the dangers of logging, and about accidental injury and death. In cycles of stories, eccentric crew foremen and backwoods strongmen mature into local villains and heroes. Yarns are woven about the dictatorial policies of cooks who demanded total obedience to the unwritten codes of bunkhouse decorum. Many narratives recount practical jokes that initiated unwitting greenhorns into the world of the lumberman or that undermined the authority of a tyrannical foreman. Barroom brawls, which are often the result of grudges that fester in the logging camps or on the job, become sagas peppered with violence and brutality.

In addition to swapping stories, the loggers maintained a rich singing tradition. Ballads such as “The Saranac River” or “Blue Mountain Lake” chronicle the work experiences of local lumbermen. “Tebo” tells how Tebo died while breaking a log jam. But these songs appear to be no more or less popular than such migratory lumber songs as the sentimental “Jam on Gerry’s Rock” or “Lumberman’s Alphabet.” Many of the logging songs collected in the Adirondacks are localized versions of songs that can be found throughout the United States and Canada, wherever the axes of the lumbermen rang through the forests. Collectors in this century also have found a rich tradition of Anglo, Anglo Irish, and French Canadian ballads existing alongside these American logging ballads.

Efforts at revitalizing or maintaining some of the Adirondack folklife traditions seek to tap tourist dollars and to educate local people and visitors about Adirondack life. Woodcrafts, ranging from whittling pine chains, to weaving baskets that recapture traditional Native American patterns, to producing Adirondack chairs and canoes, provide glimpses of traditions that a few years ago could be found only in museums. Oral traditions, especially folksongs, are performed at folk festivals held during the summer and fall months throughout the Adirondacks. Several museums featuring examples of Adirondack folklife, including both arts and crafts, are open to the public. These public events and displays provide new audiences for the traditions of the Adirondacks.

Richard Sweterlitsch

References

- The Adirondacks. 1966. *New York Folklore Quarterly* 22:2.
- Bethke, Robert D. 1981. *Adirondack Voices: Woodsmen and Lore*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Cutting, Edith E. 1944. *Lore of an Adirondack County*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Thomas, Howard. 1962. *Folklore from the Adirondack Foothills*. N.p.: Prospect Books.
- Thompson, Harold W. [1939] 1962. *Body, Boots, and Britches: Folktales, Ballads, and Speech from Country New York*. New York: Dover.
- Wessels, William L. 1961. *Adirondack Profiles*. Lake George, NY: Adirondack Resorts Press.
- White, William Chapman. 1967. *Adirondack Country*. New York: Alfred Knopf.

African Americans

Known as American Negroes in 1888 when the American Folklore Society (AFS) identified those American ethnic groups whose unique cultural traditions should be documented and preserved. Much debate ensued over the label attached to this group, which presently comprises between 11 and 12 percent of the total U.S. population. As was customary during the late 19th century, the founders of the AFS used the Spanish-derived title “Negro.” However, pejoratives such as “darker,” “nigger,” and “coon” were not uncommon vernacular labels during that era and were often used unashamedly. Turn of the century activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett and her colleagues made the case that “Afro-American” ought to be adopted by the American population. For many, the designation “colored” was considered a polite and acceptable label until the 1960s. In the heyday of the modern civil rights movement, the label “Black” became the one accepted by many members of the group. This name appealed to those who felt that peoples of African descent should embrace their dark complexions and African physical features. Of course, several centuries of mixing between the various ethnic groups of the United States meant that a wide range of skin tones, facial features, and body types were evident in this population. By the 1980s, many began to prefer a designation that specified the country of origin. Since then, “African American” has been the preferred label.

The founders of the American Folklore Society connected Negro folklore with the institution of slavery. They rationalized that efforts to collect Negro folklore must be undertaken before all of those who had experienced slavery died. The presumption seems to have been that traces of slave tradition would not be evident in the repertoires of the descendents of slaves. But even before the formation of the American Folklore Society, African American folklore had aroused the interest of a few talented persons. In particular, the musical traditions of the slaves had triggered the curiosity of individuals such as Lucy McKim Garrison and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, who published collections containing Negro folk music in the 1860s.

Journalist Joel Chandler Harris’ fascination with the folktales he had heard as a child led him to publish seven volumes of folktales featuring the exploits of Brer Rabbit, Brer Fox, Brer Alligator, and numerous other animal characters. Three additional volumes were published after Harris’ death in 1908. Known as trickster tales, these narratives suggest that the slaves identified with ostensibly powerless heroes who used their verbal dexterity, cunning, and verve to outwit larger, more obviously powerful opponents. Such tales served to educate and entertain African Americans of all ages. Trickster tales and other folk narratives continued to be important to African Americans long after the demise of slavery.

Most late 19th- and early 20th-century folklore research took place in Southern environs. In particular, a chain of islands along the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina known as the Sea Islands proved to be a rich region for fieldwork. Once a popular destination point for slave ships, these islands were inhabited by large numbers of Blacks whose connections with Africa were stronger than those of Blacks elsewhere in the United States. Until well into the 20th century, residents of the Sea Islands spoke distinctive dialects—gullah and geechee—clearly derived from West African language

systems. In addition their verbal traditions, their material culture—house types, gardens, textiles, and like artifacts—reflect strong Caribbean and African influences.

In the first decades of the 20th century, the field of folklore began to attract a few trained African American folklorists. Because Black informants were more apt to reveal provocative texts to other blacks, this was a particularly welcome development. The works of Thomas Washington Talley and Arthur Huff Fauset laid significant groundwork for future Black folklorists. However, of the early 20th-century Black folklorists, Zora Neale Hurston emerges as the most significant innovator. In her landmark text *Mules and Men* (1935), she included contextual information as well as the actual tales recited by her rural Black informants. During the folk-belief phase of research for this volume, she underwent the rituals necessary to become a voodoo priestess in New Orleans. Although her creative output was not limited to folklore per se, all of her literary endeavors reflected her appreciation for folklore.

Starting with the Harlem Renaissance, several African American literary figures dabbled in folklore collecting and research. Celebrated poet Langston Hughes published a lengthy volume on Negro folklore. His collection of short stories on the trials and tribulations of Jesse B. Semple contains prodigious quantities of Black folk speech. Most important African American novelists have expressed a profound debt to folklore. Literary giant Ralph Ellison relied heavily on African American folklore in his masterpiece *Invisible Man*, and later in the 20th century, Toni Morrison, Alice Walker, and Terry McMillan acknowledged their reliance on folklore materials for their short stories and novels.

In the 1930s, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) created jobs for unemployed writers and teachers that entailed fieldwork collecting folklore and life histories from elderly ex-slaves. Coordinated by Benjamin A. Botkin, the project was an enormous one, yielding thousands of interviews. Many of the collectors had no formal training and were unaccustomed to thinking of Black traditions as worthy of respect. Rather than quoting the informants word for word, the untrained collectors summarized the tales in their own words. Still, the narratives contain a wealth of information unduplicated in other sources. Responsible folklorists are careful to acknowledge the collecting irregularities when using this data.

From spirituals to gospel, from field hollers to rap, the wide range of African American sacred and secular musical expression has long intrigued folklorists and ethnomusicologists. Like their African ancestors, African Americans considered music an essential component of everyday life. In most African communities, composing and performing music appropriate for each activity was an integral part of spiritual expression. The African impulse to produce and perform music survived the horrendous strains of the Middle Passage and became a mainstay of New World African Americans, who wove their own musical styles with those they heard from the masters. During the slavery era, the slaves' musical aptitude was duly noted by the master class. Thus was born the still pervasive stereotype that holds that Blacks are born musicians who possess "natural rhythm." Slaves are credited with introducing percussion instruments and a forerunner of the banjo with them to the New World. Polyrhythms, frequent use of percussion instruments and antiphonal or call-and-response patterns are distinctive features of African American folk musical expression.

Few academic debates proved more resilient than the one over “survivals” in African American folklore. Whether it is the rhythm of the music, the arrangement of blocks in a quilt, the personality of a hero in a narrative, the first question asked is often, “Where did it come from—Africa or Europe?” In the first decades of folklore research, it was widely assumed that



Street musicians play an accordion and a washboard. Near New Iberia, Louisiana, about 1940. Photo Russell Lee. Library of Congress.

the Middle Passage—the brutal interim spent aboard slave ships between Africa and the Americas—combined with the devastating impact of the seasoning years, had eradicated all traces of African culture from the psyches of slaves, rendering them cultural blank slates. Advocates of this position maintained that slave lore was derived from inept, clumsy imitations of the European forms to which the slaves were exposed. However, as researchers began to scrutinize West African cultures, common denominators between African and African American folklore became increasingly apparent. Africanist William R. Bascom noted numerous motifs and tale types common to West African folktales. Folk-speech specialists such as Lorenzo D. Turner identified many African words and idioms within the English spoken by both White and Black Americans. For folk-music authorities, the emphasis on call-and-response structure and the polyrhythmic organization of African American musical expression signaled its connection to West African types.

Of course, European influences on African American folklore are undeniable. English is the first language of African Americans and, like their African ancestors, African Americans enjoy and value imitation. By the same token, the folklore traditions of Americans of European descent reflect borrowings from Black traditions. Most folklorists agree that African American folk traditions are syncretized. Blacks have retained many West African aesthetic principles and wedded them to those from other cultures to which they have been exposed. The songs, narratives, jokes, rituals, beliefs, and so forth that result are intrinsically African American.

Throughout the late 19th century and well into the 20th, African Americans migrated from rural Southern roads to urban Northern streets. Folklore continued to function as an essential expression of everyday Black life. Older genres were modified to fit city environments. Bluesmen frequently replaced acoustic instruments with electric ones, and lyrics focused on the challenges posed by urban industrial life. Quilters modified their techniques to include sewing machines. Worship services took place in storefront churches rather than in pine-board ones. Thus, urban life altered but did not diminish the importance of folklore.

African Americans celebrate verbal versatility and have employed a variety of modes of verbal communication to express themselves. Children are urged to hone their oratorical abilities. Girls often begin by chanting the intricate rhymes that accompany “Double-Dutch” jump-roping sessions. Boys and many girls develop their skills by participating in ritual insult-swapping sessions known as “playing the dozens.” In some circles, sophisticated verbal artistry is conveyed in toasts—lengthy epic poems featuring the escapades of unlikely Black heroes. Other familiar genres of African American folk speech include signifyin’, capping, rapping, loud-talking, and marking. Friendly competition is often the hallmark of these forms as individuals vie for respect by showing off their verbal prowess.

Contemporary legends and rumors are as common among African Americans as they are within the dominant culture. Some cycles, like the Kentucky Fried Rat and the mouse in the Coke bottle, are well known by both Blacks and Whites. But cycles specific to the concerns of African Americans have evolved and are well contained within the group. Businesses that have unorthodox advertising practices and symbolically charged products are often identified in these legends. The notion that “the government” constructs elaborate anti-Black conspiracies is often promoted.

Not all scrutiny of African American folklore has been on verbal forms. In the past several decades, many folklorists have turned their attention to material culture, in particular house types and quilts. Throughout African American rural communities, shotgun houses have been cataloged. The floor plans for these houses line up a back exit behind a front entrance with no wall or structural interference between the two doors. Thus, it is said that if a shot was fired from either the front or rear of the house, the bullet would go straight through, without lodging in the home. These houses are remarkably similar to structures found in many West African communities. There the folk explanation for the floor plan maintains that if the spirit of an ancestor wanders into the home, it will wander out the other side without getting trapped within. Many quilts made by African American women and men vary a great deal from other American quilts. Like many kinds of West African textiles, long, rectangular strips dominate many of the quilts. Conventional symmetry in which a shape or a color is balanced on one side by the same

shape or color on the other seems to be less important to African American quilters than to other quilters. Many Black quilters prefer to fool the eye by knowingly constructing asymmetrical arrangements. Synthetic fabrics are used more often in African American quilts than in mainstream quilts, and red is the most frequently used color. Academic attention to African American material culture has triggered interest in the art world. African American quilts, baskets, sculpture, and other artifacts are found and sold in the finest museums and galleries.

African American spiritual life has always been a rich source of folklore. During the slavery era, African Americans combined West African and Caribbean folk-belief practices with Christian beliefs. A system of folk belief known as conjure or hoodoo evolved in many Southern locales. Believers presumed that conjure doctors understood how to use powers contained in nature, and some conjure doctors were accorded the same respect as preachers. Conjure or hoodoo are sometimes confused with voodoo, which is akin to *voudou* in Haiti. These belief systems stem from Dahomean (present-day Nigeria) sacred practices. Dahomeans traded into slavery were transported to Haiti. Some of these slaves were then traded to New Orleans. Voodoo is an enormously complex system centered on root work and snake worship. In voodoo as well as *santeria* (Cuba and the United States), *candomble* (Brazil and the United States), and *shango* (Trinidad and the United States), African religious principles are syncretized with Christian principles.

More conventional Christian worship is also common in African American communities. Folklorists have been particularly interested in the delivery styles of African American preachers and the status afforded the congregation. African American congregations actively participate in all aspects of the worship service. Preachers frequently chant their sermons, all the while soliciting affirmation and testimony from their listeners. A lively, vocal congregation is the sign of a successful preacher.

Young African Americans often complain about the speed at which the population at large appropriates appealing Black folk expression. Music, clothing, dance styles, and art forms shaped by African Americans are soon adopted by the dominant culture. However, the impulse to transform and invent folk expression is a strong one, and African Americans, like all folk groups, will continue to enjoy an exciting folk culture.

Patricia A. Turner

References

- Abrahams, Roger. [1964] 1970. *Deep Down in the Jungle: Negro Narrative Folklore from the Streets of Philadelphia*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Dance, Daryl Cumber. 1978. *Shuckin' and Jivin': Folklore from Contemporary Black Americans*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Davis, Gerald L. 1985. *I Got the Word in Me and I Can Sing It, You Know*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1967. *American Negro Folktales*. New York: Fawcett World Library.
- Dundes, Alan, ed. 1990. *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press.
- Ferris, William. 1983. *Afro-American Folk Art and Crafts*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press.
- Fry, Gladys-Marie. 1975. *Night Riders in Black Folk History*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

- . 1990. *Stitched from the Soul: Slave Quilts from the Antebellum South*. New York: Dutton Studio Books.
- Hughes, Langston, and Arna Bontemps, eds. 1958. *The Book of Negro Folklore*. New York: Dodd, Mead.
- Jones, Bessie, and Bess Lomax Hawes. 1972. *Step It Down: Games, Plays, Songs and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Kochman, Thomas. 1977. *Rappin' and Stylin' Out: Communication in Urban Black America*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Levine, Lawrence W. 1977. *Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Thought from Slavery to Freedom*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Major, Clarence. 1994. *Juba to Jive: A Dictionary of African American Slang*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Morgan, Kathryn J. 1980. *Children of Strangers: The Stories of a Black Family*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Roberts, John W. 1989. *From Trickster to Badman: The Black Folk Hero from Slavery to Freedom*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Southern, Eileen. 1983. *The Music of Black Americans: A History*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- Turner, Patricia A. 1993. *I Heard It through the Grapevine: Rumor in African American Culture*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Vlach, John Michael. 1991. *By the Work of Their Hands: Studies in Afro-American Folklife*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
- Wiggins, William H., Jr. 1987. *O Freedom Afro-American Emancipation Celebrations*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- See also* Banjo; Black English, Blues; Breakdancing; Dozens; Gospel Music; Holler; Jazz; Juke Joint; Juneteenth; Kwanzaa; Minstrel Shows; Mojo; Rap; Sermon, Folk; Shout; Social Protest in Folklore; Spirituals, African American; Stagolee; Stepping; Toast; and the names of individual performers, characters, and scholars

Aging, Folklore and

Traditional expressive culture created around the experience of growing old. During the 1970s, an area of shared interest opened for gerontologists and folklorists, as many in the social sciences abandoned explanatory, scientific paradigms of aging in favor of interpretive approaches. Gerontologists, in search of predictable patterns and processes, theorized aging largely as a social problem: The elderly “disengage” by mutual agreement (disengagement theory), or they actively resist disengagement (activity theory), or they form a discrete subculture in an age-stratified society (subculture theory), or they undergo identity crises, precipitated by the loss of former roles (identity crisis theory) (Mullen 1992:10–13). Folklorists, on the other hand, had long assembled collections—of ballads, riddles, tales, and tunes—from the memories of elders, little heeding a pattern linking the culture collected to an elderly consultant’s position in the life cycle.

As phenomenological perspectives gained ground in the social sciences, folklorists began to attend more carefully to contexts for performance and collection, and gerontologists, shelving the quest for predictable patterns, began to explore how the elderly construct and interpret their own experience. A mutually engaging domain for folklorists and gerontologists has been opened up by questions about how societies constitute the life cycle through culture, how and why intergenerational communication is staged, and what kinds of culture elders create around the experience of growing old.

The Social and Cultural Organization of Aging

Ways of thinking about and dividing up the life cycle vary over time and across cultures. Folklore generated in America about this progression articulates and comments upon “stages” of life. Anticipating life’s stages, children recite them in rhymes and songs: “Solomon Grundy, born on Monday/Christened on Tuesday/Married on Wednesday...” or “When I was a baby, a baby, a baby, when I was a baby, this is what I did,” which continues through grandmotherhood and death (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:18). Reflecting on those stages, elders hone hindsight into aphorism: “If you’re twenty and not a revolutionary, you have no heart. If you’re forty and a revolutionary, you have no mind” or “A fox is smart because he is old, not because he is a fox” or “Snow on the roof doesn’t mean there’s no fire in the furnace.” These fragments hint at multigenerational perspectives on the life cycle, and an underlying ever-present negotiation of the elder’s image and role in society.

Biological and social milestones formally separate and define phases of life. Out of tradition, history, personal experience and social relationships, communities fashion rites of passage to signal or precipitate transitions from one stage of life to another: the christening or bris (circumcision rite), the bar mitzvah or confirmation, the graduation, the driver's license, the wedding, the divorce, the baby shower, the retirement banquet, the funeral and associated rituals. Displaying knowledge about nature and society, such rites socially redefine the person passing from preschool to school age, childhood to adolescence, single to married state (and vice versa), career to retirement, life to death.

The notion of the milestone implies gradual progression, or "development," toward a goal. Around experiences common to each stage of life people create and master expressive forms that social scientists have related to "developmental" tasks. Through such cultural practices as jumping rope, children develop physical coordination, social skills, and cognitive proficiency. Children riddling come to terms with cultural categories and learn that the conceptual frames holding reality in place are manipulable. Adolescents on the threshold of greater social responsibility dramatize their concerns in frightening stories about baby-sitting and dating, or through humor about sexuality. Adults in what psychologist Eric Erikson terms their "generative" phase engage again with the early stages of life, but this time from the perspective of parents, teachers, or supervisors, shaping out of symbolic repertoires new realms of lore and custom: bedtime rituals, occupational rites of initiation, narratives of birth and delivery, and ways of celebrating anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays. Throughout this period of life, as physical abilities peak and decline, proficiency with symbolic resources like proverb, narrative, and ritual is apt to increase.

The transition from the social roles and experiences generally associated with mid-life to those associated with old age does not happen automatically or abruptly. Though distinguished by certain kinds of events—the retirement banquet, the birth of grandchildren, the fiftieth high school reunion, the golden jubilee—old age is experienced by many as "one of the great unrealizables," in the words of Simone de Beauvoir. However, the accumulation of experiences common to old age, such as loss of loved ones and diminishing physical abilities, are also linked with cultural practices distinctive to that stage in life, including reminiscing and the rendering of long memories into tangible form.

Reminiscing, a logical practice for those with the longest memories, was until recent decades discouraged in the elderly, because it seemed to betoken a desire to disengage from the present and dwell in the past. However, research since the 1960s suggests that: (1) reviewing one's memories is essential to a major developmental task in later years: life integration (Butler 1968); and (2) folklore is a resource used by elders to give meaning to their lives (Bronner 1984; Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987; Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989a, 1989b; Mullen 1992). In addition to recasting our perceptions of culture created by elders, this insight has tremendous implications for the practice of folklore, which has traditionally relied on the memories of elderly informants.

The Elderly as Culture Makers

Certain kinds of experience distinguish the elderly from those in earlier stages of life and form the basis for the creation of culture—material, verbal, and ritual—that is distinctive to elders. Looming large in later life is the experience of discontinuity. Ruptures of various kinds cast the social and biological terrain into disarray: the deaths of loved ones and acquaintances, the loss of physical ability, the severance from agendas that held childhood and mid-life in place. Many cultural practices of the elderly—the crafting of new routines, the sociality achieved in senior centers, the revival of skills or traditions acquired in youth—appear especially designed to mend such breaches.

Another experience, shared only with members of one's generational "cohort," is that of having entered the stream of history at the same time and experiencing pivotal moments from a shared position in the life cycle—a position historically unique to that generation. Having participated in history from the same position in the life cycle, elderly contemporaries share understandings to which younger generations are not privy, and these shared understandings and memories are a resource that the culture elders produce with and for each other. Some studies have looked at how elders use tradition to craft sociality: elderly Italian men playing bocce ball (Mathias 1974); Mexicano *viejos* giving voice to elders of bygone days (*viejos*) through *la platica de los viejitos de antes* (Briggs 1988); Hungarian raconteurs fitting personal experiences into traditional tale types over the telephone (Degh 1969); older women collaborating on quilts that embody overlapping biographies (Beck 1982); jokes and narratives exchanged—over a game of cards or pool or on a tour bus—about memory lapses or other physical problems ("organ recitals," in a coin of Mayer Kirshenblatt) (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:32). Thus engaging each other, shaping and affirming their generation's reality, elders bestow form and meaning on the inchoate and disquieting aspects of old age. The culture they create defends against isolation and discontinuity, stitching together a community as it gathers disjunct moments in history into a coherent whole.

A related experience is the capacity to see the world from the perspective of multiple generations. "At eighty you can be the age of whoever you talk to," said Ethel Mohammed of Belzoni, Mississippi, when in her eighties (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:27). "I am all ages simultaneously," wrote Bluma Purmell in her autobiography (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:56–59). This ability to adopt the perspective of other age groups is a powerful resource for overcoming a devastating sense of "otherness" (Mullen 1992:18). Cultivating empathy in the young, the elder becomes someone who was, and still is, a child or a young man or a new mother, who knows what life's central experiences are like, despite sweeping technological changes.

In recent decades, some folklorists have examined the ways in which elders shape reminiscence into "life review projects." In some cases, elders compose autobiographies, explicitly for grandchildren, organizing their memories on paper or on tape (Hufford 1992:174–188). Other projects take the form of scrapbooks, or organizing the photo album or a chest of keepsakes. Objects featured in folk-art exhibits developed during the

1980s show the hallmarks of self-definitional rites, which Barbara Myerhoff observed in the elderly (Myerhoff 1978). Fashioning autobiography, some elders craft new social roles and networks as well.

Autobiography, which situates the self in narrative, is one way of conferring wholeness on a fragmented array of experience. Some elders begin to reconstitute their past in response to cataclysmic loss—the death of a loved one who was a significant witness in a person’s life, premature unemployment, the onset of significant disability, the removal of familiar settings, or recognition of the sheer passage of time. Thus, feeling “like a ship without a rudder” at her husband’s death, Ethel Mohammed began a series of embroidered scenes spanning the years of her life (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:44–45). Other memory projects have been precipitated by life-cycle events or by inexplicable memory surges reported among the very elderly. To celebrate her retirement from a family business in the year of her fiftieth wedding anniversary, Viola Hanscam of Oregon transformed scraps of clothing worn over the years by family members into seven stair rugs, each depicting a threshold event such as a wedding, a birth, a move to a new home (Jones, 1980:85). Bluma Purmell of Philadelphia found her mind flooded with insistent memories from her childhood, and she then saturated canvases with bright paintings of turn-of-the-century farm life in southern New Jersey (Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987:56–59).

Memory projects may materialize a world in which an elder took shape but which now exists only in memory. Reconstituting a lost world enables an elderly artist to recover the experiences of that world, to articulate the imprint of the elder’s generation on the world at a particular time in history. Crafting a miniature farmyard, carving a set of old-fashioned lumbering tools, modeling scenes from childhood neighborhoods or homelands, displaying collections of tools on barn walls or in home museums, or demonstrating the use of old machinery at festivals, elderly artists materialize aspects of life that exist only in memory and thus show younger witnesses how the world has changed (Beck 1982; Hufford, Hunt, and Zeitlin 1987).

Such projects can provide elders with new social currency, functioning as thresholds for narratives and other forms of enactment that conjure lost worlds in the presence of witnesses. Myerhoff has observed that performing before witnesses is essential to complete the work of self-definition: “Always, self and society are known to the subjects themselves—through enactments” (Myerhoff, 1978:32). Witnesses provide the reflecting surface integral to any definitional rite, affirming that the self portrayed and the self apprehended are one and the same. Interestingly, in a number of remembered worlds, the elder is represented as a young witness to a now vanished way of life. This representation comprises a subtle direction to fresh witnesses of worlds written, collected, carved, narrated, or painted. The elder’s self-definitional work becomes a resource for future elders, furnishing models and materials for the perennial task of defining self and community.

As a widespread and patterned means of traditionalizing experience, memory projects invite serious folkloristic study. Recent studies of memory projects challenge traditional perspectives on folk art, which have excluded memory projects as too personal, too nontraditional, or too eclectic for consideration. In another quarter, folk-art collectors and historians have obscured the material culture of the elderly through interpretations that excise autobiographical and historical meanings (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1988:148).

This pattern of constructing intergenerational ties challenges dominant assumptions about cultural transmission. Traditional skills, which according to conventional wisdom are “passed on from generation to generation,” are not, in fact, so automatically transferred. The link-chain effect of grandparents teaching grandchildren is echoed in the elder’s exploration of life’s earlier stages for skills and memories to take up in later years. The common pattern of a cultural hiatus in mid-life fosters an impression that traditions are “dying” along with their elderly practitioners. Repeatedly we see retirees revive skills to which they were exposed in childhood, such as fiddling, basketry, gardening, and needlework (Jabbour 1981; Hawes 1984), but the recycled skill need not take the form of a canonical tradition to fit this pattern. Nontraditional materials and idioms may be used in the traditionalizing labor of shaping life’s experiences into meaningful form. The active role of younger witnesses in stimulating such practices among elders seems to support Margaret Mead’s assertion that cultural survival depends on the simultaneous participation of three generations (Mead 1972:311).

Such insights about witnessing shed new light on the folklorist’s traditional reliance on the elderly. For folklorists and anthropologists seeking information about vanishing traditions, elderly individuals were ideal informants for documenting “culture at a distance.” Sifting through the memories of elders for vanished customs, sayings, narratives, songs, and so forth, early folklorists were able to assemble collections that effectively displaced autobiographical contexts of origin. Only recently have folklorists and anthropologists come to appreciate their role as witnesses to the life stories jointly constructed in the ethnographic interview, itself a worthy topic for further investigation.

Mary Hufford

References

- Beck, Jane. 1982. *Always in Season: Folk Art and Traditional Culture in Vermont*. Montpelier: Vermont Council on the Arts.
- Briggs, Charles. 1988. *Competence in Performance: The Creativity of Tradition in Mexican Verbal Arts*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Bronner, Simon. 1984. *Chain Carvers: Old Men Crafting Meaning*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Butler, Robert N. 1968. The Life Review: An Interpretation of Reminiscence in the Aged. *Psychiatry* 26 (1):65–76.
- Dégh, Linda. 1969. Two Old World Narrators in an Urban Setting. In *Kontakte und Grenzen: Festschrift für Gerhard Heilfurth*. Göttingen, Germany.
- Hawes, Bess. 1984. Folk Arts and the Elderly. In *Festival of American Folklife Program Book*, ed. Thomas Vennum. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution.
- Hufford, Mary. 1992. *Chaseworld: Foxhunting and Storytelling in New Jersey’s Pine Barrens*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hufford, Mary, Marjorie Hunt, and Steven J. Zeitlin. 1987. *The Grand Generation: Memory, Mastery, Legacy*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Travelling Exhibition Service; Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Jabbour, Alan. 1981. Some Thoughts from a Folk Cultural Perspective. In *Perspectives on Aging: Exploding the Myth*, ed. Priscilla Johnston. Cambridge: Ballinger.
- Jones, Suzi. 1980. *Webfoots and Bunchgrassers: Folk Art of the Oregon Country*. Salem: Oregon Arts Commission.

- Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara. 1988. Mistaken Dichotomies. *Journal of American Folklore* 101:140–155.
- . 1989a. Authoring Lives. *Journal of Folklore Research* 26:123–149.
- . 1989b. Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review. In *Folk Groups and Folklore Genres: A Reader*, ed. Eliot Oring. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- Mathias, Elizabeth. 1974. The Game as Creator of the Group in an Italian American Community. *Pennsylvania Folklife* 4:22–30.
- Mead, Margaret. 1972. *Blackberry Winter: My Earlier Years*. New York: William Morrow.
- Mullen, Patrick. 1992. *Listening to Old Voices: Folklore, Life Stories, and the Elderly*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Myerhoff, Barbara. 1978. *Number Our Days*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- See also* Life History

Almanac

Annual compendium of calendar, weather, astronomical, astrological, and navigational charts eventually expanded to include miscellaneous entertainments and information on a broad range of topics. Almanacs as we recognize them evolved in the late Middle Ages in order to provide useful charts and information about the movements of celestial bodies and the tides. By the 16th and 17th centuries, astrology and belief in the ability to prognosticate weather based on the movements of the heavenly bodies received wide acceptance among the educated, and charts reflecting both became staples in most almanacs.

The first book printed in colonial America was an almanac, written by Captain William Pierce and published by Stephen Daye in 1639, at Cambridge, Massachusetts. By the end of the century, the number and variety of almanacs published by colonial presses increased dramatically up and down the Atlantic seaboard.

Driven by fierce competition, 18th-century printers broadened what they included in their almanacs and made outrageous claims about the superiority of their almanacs over all others. The Man of Signs showing the impact of the celestial bodies on the vital organs of human beings became standard in 18th-century almanacs. James Franklin and Nathaniel Ames, two Boston printers, added snippets of news events and short moralizing essays. James' brother Benjamin Franklin, using the pseudonym Richard Saunders, edited from 1732 to 1758 *Poor Richard's Almanac*, perhaps one of the best-known American almanacs. It was packed with proverbs—some of his own coining, but most drawn from other sources—practical recommendations for farmers and domestics, and detailed descriptions of American customs and traditions.

Gradually, printers incorporated popular jests and current comic anecdotes into their almanacs. Immigrants, women, lawyers, and politicians were common targets. Medical formulas for curing beasts and humans became usual features, while other publishers added thrilling tales of frontier explorations, Indian captivities, and eyewitness accounts of marvelous events and strange occurrences. Homespun poetry, humorous and tragic anecdotes, popular legends and ballads, political speeches, notable quotations, patriotic essays, and cracker-barrel philosophy found their way into almanacs, alongside the weather predictions, schedules of the tides, and astrological charts.

Almanac publishers also targeted particular audiences. The almanacs directed at farmers were very successful, and one of them, the *Farmer's Almanac*, founded in 1792, endures today. Although much has been added to it, it retains many of the features of the earliest almanacs, including astrological charts, weather predictions, proverbs, and jests. Other shorter-lived, special-interest almanacs, including the *Lady's Almanac*, the *Temperance Almanac*, the *New England Anti-Masonic Almanac*, and those devoted to various religious and political causes, such as the *Christian Almanac* and the *Whig Almanac*, appeared and disappeared almost yearly. Virtually every state had its own almanac.

One of the more notable specialized almanacs featured Davy Crockett. Appearing first in 1835, two years after the publication of Crockett's *Life*, and continuing until 1856,



Title page of Davy Crockett's Almanack for 1836. In the mid-1800s, humorous almanacs surged in popularity. Library of Congress.

its various authors packed the series with tall tales and graphic illustrations about the incredible adventures of the real and a fictitious Crockett. This almanac played a

significant role in transforming this backwoodsman, politician, and soldier of fortune into a culture hero.

By the 19th century, almanacs had become important conduits of popular culture and cheap literature. But late in the century, publishers began calling books of facts almanacs. Addressed to urbanites, these publications dropped the astrological and navigational information and ceased publishing material drawn from folklore and popular culture. In their place, publishers provided statistical information about business and industry, news summaries of major national and international news events, and factual data about government, entertainment, and sports.

At the end of the 20th century, only a few of the earlier kind of almanacs exist, maintaining a publishing tradition that saw its heyday in the 18th and 19th centuries when almanacs captured in print current popular culture and folk traditions.

Richard Sweterlitsch

References

- Dodge, Robert K. 1987. *Early American Almanac Humor*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press.
- Dorson, Richard M., ed. [1939] 1977. *Davy Crockett: American Comic Legend*. Westport, CT: Greenwood.
- Kittredge, George Lyman. 1904. *The Old Farmer and His Almanack*. Boston: William Ware.
- Sagendorph, Robb. 1970. *America and Her Alamanacs*. Dublin, NH: Yankee; Boston: Little, Brown.
- Stowell, Marion Barber. 1977. *Early American Almanacs: The Colonial Weekly Bible*. New York: Burt Franklin.
- See also* Franklin, Benjamin; Weatherlore

American Folklife Center

A national research, archival, and programming center established in 1976 within the Library of Congress (LC) in Washington, DC, by Public Law 94–201, the American Folklife Preservation Act. The center’s congressional mandate to “preserve and present American folklife” has led to a variety of field projects, publications, public programs, and exhibitions, and its Archive of Folk Culture is the largest and most comprehensive North American ethnographic collection of folk music, folklore, and folklife.

The center was created after several years of congressional debate regarding its value, location, and functions, and a lobbying effort supported by the American Folklore Society and organized by folklorist Archie Green. The effort also resulted in the creation of the folk and traditional arts program of the National Endowment for the Arts, and it coaxed the National Endowment for the Humanities into greater recognition of the field. The center is overseen by a board of trustees, and its budget is from federal appropriations supplemented by private funds.

The center undertakes projects that document folk cultural traditions in the field. Such projects continue the tradition of the center’s Archive of Folk Culture, which since 1928



*Logos of the American Folklife Center,
Washington DC.*



In addition to projects around the country, the American Folklife Center sponsors events close to home, like demonstrations of singing and dancing in front of the Library of Congress. Washington, DC, 1995. Photo J.W. Love. Courtesy of the photographer.

has used fieldwork to generate collections. In the archive's early history, documentation focused on musical traditions and used sound recordings as the primary medium. The center's fieldwork includes verbal traditions, dance, ceremony, material culture, traditional knowledge and skills, and "way of life." Documentary media include not only sound recordings but still photography and other visual media.

Center publications range from research tools to policy studies, from bibliographies and discographies to compact discs and a videodisc, from informational booklets to exhibition catalogs. Two series, *Publications of the American Folklife Center* and *Studies in American Folklife*, are ongoing, and a third, *Folklife Annual*, produced five editions

between 1985 and 1990. Other center publications have appeared in cooperation with private-sector presses and media companies. *Folklife Center News* (1977–) publishes articles on center activities and essays on the field.

Center exhibitions have ranged from modest displays to major traveling exhibitions with book-length catalogs, such as *The American Cowboy* (1983) or *Old Ties, New Attachments: Italian American Folklife in the West* (1992). Public events include a summer concert series, winter workshops and demonstrations, periodic lectures, symposia, and scholarly conferences. The center's tradition of technological experimentation began with its archive. Just as Robert Winslow Gordon experimented with a portable disc-cutting machine in the early 1930s, the center produced a videodisc (*The Ninety-Six Ranch*) in the 1980s and has pioneered in using the Internet to share information and collections digitally in the 1990s.

Reference services are available in both the archival collections and the general subject areas of folklore and folklife. In addition to direct access to the collections, visitors to the Folklife Reading Room find a selection of the LC's publications pertaining to folklore and folklife, listening and viewing facilities, and extensive vertical files covering persons, organizations, and subject areas. Reference services are available by telephone, correspondence, or electronic mail. *Folklife Sourcebook* lists information regarding the national field. The center is accessible through LC MARVEL, the Library of Congress' Internet address: lcmarvel@seq1.loc.gov. Recorded telephone service, Folklife, provides information on events, jobs, and other subjects (202-707-2000). Address inquiries to American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, Washington, DC 20540-8100, or call 202-707-6590 (offices) or 202-707-5510 (Folklife Reading Room).

Alan Jabbour

References

Hardin, James. 1990. The Role of the American Folklife Center: Preserving and Presenting the Nation's Traditional Culture. *Library of Congress Information Bulletin* 49 (June 4):203-207. See also Archive of Folk Culture

American Folklore Scholarship: The Early Years

Collection and study of American folklore from the beginning to the 20th century. In a sense, American folklore scholarship began almost simultaneously with the European discovery of the New World. Friar Ramon Pane accompanied Christopher Columbus on his second voyage in 1493 for the express purpose of collecting all the “ceremonies and antiquities” of the Taino Indians, a tribe that has long been extinct. Three years later, in 1496, Pane’s little book, *On the Antiquities of the Indians*, appeared. This moralistic view of Indian folklore written from a Christian standpoint included narratives, beliefs, and accounts of rituals. In its emphasis upon the Indian and his quaintness, Pane’s volume is typical of most of the works dealing with American folklore that followed it over the next four centuries.

While there were other collectors of American folklore after Pane, it was the 19th century before anyone envisioned a field of study in which folklore would be the central concern. Henry Rowe Schoolcraft (1793–1864) was the first American to set forth a systematic concept for a discipline of folklore. His first suggestions in this regard were presented in *Algie Researches* (1839), a collection of American Indian narratives Schoolcraft gathered during several years as an Indian agent on the northwestern frontier. His ideas were more fully presented in later publications. Basically, Schoolcraft envisioned a total science of man, albeit one that focused on the “rude nations,” in which folklore played an important part. Schoolcraft’s new discipline had four main objects of inquiry: (1) physical type of man; (2) material existence, by which he meant what is now called material culture; (3) intellectual existence, including music and poetry, oral tales and legends, medical knowledge, and mythology; and (4) geographical phenomena affecting or modifying the above features. These elements were to be determined through examination of numerous types of data, including art remains, dictionaries, grammars, place names, skulls, mummies, histories by European travelers, missionary translations, works ascribed to natives, “authentic traditions of all ages and countries,” natural history, and mythology. Although much more than folklore was included in this new field of study, Schoolcraft nevertheless considered oral and material tradition basic and essential to the whole. Mythology was particularly significant because it contained the framework of the philosophy and religion of the “rude nations” and gave character to their songs and poetry.

Schoolcraft’s “new” science involved both field observation and library work, emphasized the American Indian, and was survivalistic. Oral traditions were regarded as fossils of an earlier day that were still preserved and functioning though rapidly disappearing. Like the bones of extinct or ancient species of animals, they were far removed from civilization. This concept of folklore made the collection of such materials urgent, because those gathering them were retrieving from “the oblivion of past generations matter for thought and reflection for the future.”

Although Schoolcraft is correctly designated the “father of American folklore,” he made little contribution to his chosen field beyond the information he collected. Like most of his contemporaries, he considered himself primarily a collector, but a few scholars active at the same time were primarily theorists. The two most important of these were Horatio Emmons Hale (1817–1896) and Daniel Garrison Brinton (1837–1899), America’s premier solar mythologists. Both were indebted to the German-born scholar Max Müller (1823–1900), who maintained that all myths could be linked to the sun and the solar cycle. While Hale basically accepted the “disease of language” thesis that Müller used to dismiss any factual basis for myth and legend, he was convinced that such traditions often originated historically. In numerous books, such as *Myths of the New World* (1868) and *American Hero-Myths* (1882), Brinton reached essentially the same conclusion as Müller, differing from the European master in not relating all myths to the sun; in several instances, he found connections with the moon or with lightning. Brinton saw a need to study the influence of myths on both the individual and the national mind, but he realized that the state of collections often made this kind of analysis difficult, if not impossible. Both Brinton and Hale championed a theoretical viewpoint that was never very popular in America and is now the most soundly rejected of all past folklore theories, and neither of these men had any students. What is more, solar mythology was a theoretical school characterized by disunity rather than unity. Most proponents acted as if they were unaware of the contributions of others holding the same views. So, although Hale and Brinton became significant individuals in folklore study, neither exerted much influence on future generations of folklorists.

Based purely on folklore collecting, few Americans of the 19th century were more important than John Wesley Powell (1834–1902). As head of the Bureau of Ethnology (after 1894, the Bureau of American Ethnology) from its founding in 1879 until his death, Powell was responsible for publishing most of the major collections of American Indian folklore that appeared in print during that twenty-three year span. Congress established the bureau primarily to carry on research already begun, but from the outset Powell intended more. He thought of the agency as the focal point around which all American Indian studies would be centered. Toward this goal, he implemented a research program that included detailed bibliographic compilations, new field studies, the development and circulation of questionnaires, and publication of *Annual Reports* and *Bulletins*.

Powell belonged to the evolutionary school that saw all society developing through four levels of progress. Three of these stages—savagery, barbarism, and civilization—were already realized, but in the future an additional level, that of “enlightenment,” would be achieved. He expounded his views in a large number of prolix and dense publications, but these writings are of interest to 20th-century readers only as historical curiosities. Powell’s real importance is as the overseer of several folklore works issued in twenty-three *Annual Reports* prepared under his direction. The authors of these works include many of the best-known 19th-century students of American Indian folklore: Erminnie A. Smith, Washington Matthews, James Owen Dorsey, James Mooney, John G. Bourke, Alice Fletcher, and Frank H. Cushing, among others. Most of these studies were consistent with Powell’s view of folklore as survivals from a lower stage of culture.

Throughout the 19th century great attention was accorded Indian folklore; prior to 1900 relatively little work was done with the lore of other groups. Even such a significant cultural group as African Americans was virtually ignored until the second half of the

19th century. Two major assumptions prevalent in American society contributed to this neglect: first, that the Black man was incapable of any thought or expression worthy of serious study, and, second, that Whites knew everything worth knowing about the slaves who lived inside White society. In the mid-19th century, this paternalistic view was considerably altered, and, in large part because of the controversy over slavery, an intellectual curiosity of the part of Whites toward the Negro emerged.

Occasional references to African American folklore started appearing beginning in the 1830s. One of these, a letter by Lucy McKim (1842–1877) in *Dwight's Journal of Music* in 1862, is often cited for first bringing slave songs to public attention, although that claim can be disputed. Not until the post-Civil War years was the first extensive collection of Negro folklore published, and it came about largely through the efforts of a classical scholar who was a pioneer in both Black dialect and song studies. William Francis Allen (1830–1889) was a native of Massachusetts who spent two years in the South with the Freedmen's and Sanitary Commissions after the Civil War. During his stay in South Carolina and Arkansas, Allen collected Negro songs, and he eventually met Charles Pickard Ware (1840–1921) and McKim, both of whom had also collected songs. The three soon met other collectors and combined their material to produce *Slave Songs of the United States* (1867).

For a pioneering work, this volume set a high standard and was unusual in that it contained musical settings for each of its 136 texts. The authors also considered regional characteristics of Negro folk music, a topic overlooked by most of their successors. They paid attention to the situations in which songs were performed, another subject that few collectors of their time considered. Admirable as it is, *Slave Songs of the United States* does have flaws, perhaps the most glaring being the ethnocentric judgments that Allen, Ware, and McKim occasionally make. For example, Negro music is judged as being either civilized or barbaric rather than seen as a musical system with its own set of values. Despite its limitations, the book brought Black folklore, or the musical part of it, to widespread public view and whetted the interest in collecting, analyzing, and performing Negro folk music that has never since abated.

Nearly two decades after the appearance of *Slave Songs of the United States*, the first extensive account of African American secular music was published. In 1886 George Washington Cable (1844–1925), primarily remembered as a local-color novelist, produced two articles for *Century* magazine dealing with Creole Negro folksong and dance. In these essays, Cable touched on two topics that were controversial for many years thereafter. One was the dispute over the banjo and its use by Black musicians, Cable flatly stating that “it is not the favorite musical instrument of the negroes of the Southern States of America.” The second dispute was over the idea that Negro songs had originated in Africa, a view that received little challenge from Cable's American contemporaries but was firmly opposed by some foreign writers, like the Englishman Richard Wallashek. The most damaging attack on the theory of African origins came many years later with the publication of Newman Ivey White's *American Negro Folksongs* (1928).

In the same decade that Cable's articles appeared, a second kind of Negro folklore came to public attention, one that all commentators at the time agreed was of purely African origin. This body of Black lore was the animal tale, as handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth. These tales gained widespread prominence in

1880 through the efforts of Georgia journalist Joel Chandler Harris (1848–1908). Harris had heard African American folktales most of his life, but the immediate impetus for his writing on the subject was a December 1877 article, “Folklore of the Southern Negroes,” in *Lippincott’s* magazine. Taking exception to author William Owens’ efforts, Harris produced his own book, *Uncle Remus: His Songs and His Sayings* (1880), which was received as a literary and folklore masterpiece. Harris claimed he was an accidental author and an unintentional folklorist, but there is little doubt that his various publications had a profound affect on the subsequent collecting of African American folktales.

Harris was sometimes uncomfortable being regarded as an authority on folklore, but he was not reticent about offering theories. At least two that he included in his Uncle Remus volumes were accepted unquestioningly by most later students of African American lore: that the folktales of Blacks were of remote African origin and did not betray European influences, and that Negro folktales had not been influenced by those of the American Indian, as John Wesley Powell and others had suggested. On the latter point, Harris was supported by no less an authority than folktale scholar Thomas Frederick Crane (1844–1927), who, in an 1881 review article, concluded that the idea of Blacks borrowing narratives from the tribesmen was “an hypothesis no one would think of maintaining.” Eighty-four years later, in 1965, Alan Dundes offered further support for this view, although he was more temperate in his claims than Crane. Among other points, Dundes noted that “many folklorists have assumed, wrongly in my opinion, that all African origins must be in West Africa.” He then pointed out that many slaves came from East Africa, where the hare, an important figure in African American folktales, is the principal trickster figure. Dundes asserted that the burden of proof was mainly on those making the claim that Blacks borrowed their trickster tales from the American Indian.

Richard M. Dorson (1916–1981), one of the most prolific American folklorists, offered the first significant challenge to the thesis of African origins of black folktales. Working with a corpus of over one thousand folktales he collected in the 1950s from Negroes born in the South, Dorson concluded that “this body of tales does not come from Africa” or “from any one place but from a number of dispersal points.” What’s more, he argued that the animal tales, such as those recorded by Harris, “are of demonstrably European origin.” Although basing his conclusions on the best available modern reference works, such as motif indexes, Dorson’s argument fell largely on deaf ears.

Two basic approaches to folklore coexisting in the late 19th century were the anthropological and the literary. Largely because of the influence of William Wells Newell (1839–1907) and Franz Boas (1858–1942), the American Folklore Society (AFS), established in 1888, was oriented toward the anthropological approach. These two men were the major forces in the early years of the AFS, Boas maintaining that role for half a century. They were united in their view of folklore as a division of the broader science of anthropology, and both wanted to make anthropology and folklore more professional. Newell thought that amateurs would undoubtedly continue to be active in folklore, but he believed they should adhere to rigorous scholarly standards. He sided with Boas on the anthropological emphasis of the American Folklore Society, thinking that in so doing he would both distinguish himself from the nonprofessionals interested in folklore and simultaneously increase the scholarly output of *the Journal of American Folklore (JAF)* by filling it primarily with anthropological data. This alliance also added the weight of

the European academic tradition, represented by Boas, to Newell's attempts to professionalize folklore.

Boas also benefited greatly from his relationship with Newell and the AFS. He had a genuine interest in folklore as a significant aspect of anthropology, and he needed the society as a power base through which he could propound his ideas. Moreover, the *JAF* was an excellent publishing outlet for his students because, unlike the anthropological journals, it allowed him control over the form and timing of the publication of articles. Actually, the American Folklore Society was virtually Boas' last hope for gaining professional clout, because it was the only organization that indicated some interest in him and his approach to anthropology. He had earlier attempted unsuccessfully to obtain positions of influence in the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the Bureau of American Ethnology. Newell, however, was grateful to have him as an ally, and he gave him virtually a free hand in AFS matters.

Perhaps the main reason Newell found Boas appealing is that Boas offered a more comprehensive and systematic approach to folklore than had existed before, one that he ultimately illustrated in his studies, theoretical papers, and field collecting projects. A major element in Boas' approach to folklore was good fieldwork, gathering material firsthand with extensive interviews. This emphasis was a bold step away from his earlier influences; 19th-century European scholars, representatives of the tradition in which Boas was trained, generally held a negative attitude toward fieldwork, regarding it as mere collecting and, thus, far removed from true scholarship, defined as the comparison, analysis, and interpretation of materials.

To Boas, good fieldwork consisted of accurately recording data and finding the best informants. Ideally, the collector should seek out someone who knew and could relate data on every aspect of village life. He usually relied on a single informant from a community, an approach unusual in his day, but one adopted later by his students. Boas also helped popularize the practice of amassing data with no particular problem in mind and with no clear idea of what was to be gained in the end. This approach resulted from his belief that each culture possesses its own concepts, categories, and biases, and that to arrive at a true understanding of another culture it was essential for scholars to collect vast quantities of reliable material in the native language. Myths and tales thus gathered would be preserved for all time as undistorted expressions of the culture, containing all of the keys necessary to understand that society. By poring over accurately recorded texts, one would arrive at new theories and new problems to be solved. In other words, the data would direct the interpretation.

Much of Boas' field methodology is considered faulty by modern standards, but he did record an enormous amount of useful data and, more than most scholars of his day, tried to view Western civilization as only one, not *the*, standard of reference. Furthermore, he realized the limitations of personal observation, and he was convinced that people see what they expect to see and interpret what they see in the light of their previous experiences. Boas insisted on accuracy in recording data and on limiting research to problems that could be solved by observable facts. He also made fieldwork, at least among "exotic" groups, popular and acceptable in a way it had never been before. Finally, his emphasis on the value of presenting accurately transcribed texts was important at a time when folktales were often published as literary products, without care for their original form.

Boas was not opposed to making theoretical pronouncements, but he was cautious about offering them. Indeed, he maintained that collecting numerous folktales from contiguous peoples and plotting the distribution of their “elements”—by which he meant something roughly akin to motifs—must precede any theoretical work. He failed to explain, however, how much collecting and mapping were needed before one could justifiably begin theorizing. It is also unclear exactly what Boas meant by theory in folklore, for he never demonstrated by example his ideas in this regard. He often referred to statements of a psychological kind, but his only detailed discussions are of historical processes.

Boas’ thinking about folklore is most completely set forth in the mammoth volume *Tsimshian Mythology* (1916). In this book, especially its prefatory essay, he emphasizes proper recording and presentation of texts, offering the then novel suggestion that folklorists should not limit their work to “star” informants or to the “correct” version of an item when variants occurred and such versions affected transmission of the tale. Unfortunately, neither Boas nor his disciples followed this idea, which is still not common practice in folklore fieldwork. The book is also important because it sets forth Boas’ concept of folktales as a “reflector of culture,” a point only hinted at previously but restated in several later writings. This thesis led Boas to think of tales as a type of cultural autobiography; he overlooked the possibility that an oral literature might not mirror all aspects of life equally.

From a scholarly standpoint, there were both positive and negative results of Boas’ decades-long influence in the American Folklore Society. His insistence on good objective fieldwork and accurate presentation of data, caution about theorizing based on faulty or insufficient material, professionalization of the field of folklore, and production of folklore fieldworkers and support for their research and publications are on the positive side. Moreover, his students constitute a veritable Who’s Who of anthropological folklorists, including, among others, A.L.Kroeber, Elsie Clews Parsons, Robert H.Lowie, Paul Radin, Martha Warren Beckwith, Ruth Benedict, Melville Jean Herskovits, Gladys Reichard, Ruth Bunqel, and Melville Jacobs.

One negative aspect of Boas’ influence was an overemphasis on American Indian folklore. While he recognized that other peoples had oral traditions, he showed little interest in nonaboriginal subjects. For example, he refused to allow Vance Randolph to do a dissertation topic dealing with Ozark mountaineers, preferring instead to direct him toward a West Coast Indian tribe. Rather than follow Boas’ suggestion, Randolph left graduate school. Boas’ bias permeated American Folklore Society publications during the more than three decades that Boasian folklorists were editors of the *Journal of American Folklore*. Throughout this period, virtually every issue of the quarterly contained at least one article or collection of tribal myths or tales, all following the Boasian model whereby texts are presented with little or no attention given to the informants, context, or style. There was, of course, nothing wrong with the collection of American Indian traditions, merely with the journal’s imbalance. The net effect was to reinforce a view held by many that folklore existed only in places and among peoples outside the mainstream of civilization.

Boasian scholarship can be faulted on several other counts. Boas had no intellectual interest in informants except as repositories of oral traditions, a lack of concern derived from his orientation toward the past. He focused entirely on bygone traditions, or what

has come to be called “memory culture.” Having thus given up any concern for the present, he saw no need to learn much about the living bearers of a tradition. Moreover, his belief in a superorganic concept of culture made any interest in those who preserve and pass on folklore irrelevant; the recording of texts was all that one needed. Boas was certainly not the only person holding such views, but he was one of the most influential adherents. This attitude held sway among folklorists long after Boas’ death in 1942 and only began to change in the mid-1960s.

Some other aspects of Boas’ thinking about folk traditions did not bode well for the future development of an independent discipline devoted to the study of folklore. He believed that it was important to collect and study oral traditions because primitive man is our ancestor, and folklore, as a reflector of culture, offers important insights into primitive thought. Through a rigorous study of tribal lore and culture, one could eventually arrive at what he called “original nature.” Thus, folklore, or the “primitive arts” as Boas sometimes called it, had importance only as a means to an end. Many of his contemporaries and scholarly descendants had essentially the same outlook.

Ultimately, Boas’ significance in the history of American folklore is that he effectively presented a systematic way of dealing with his materials. He offered a method for recording oral traditions that promised to lead eventually to the formation of folklore theories based on sound scholarship. That his ideas were adopted by numerous other scholars was in no sense a small achievement.

During the late 19th century, the literary approach to folklore was championed primarily by the Chicago Folk-Lore Society and its moving force, Fletcher S. Bassett (1847–1893), a retired lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. An independently wealthy man, Bassett had been forced into retirement in 1882 by ill health, whereupon he moved to Chicago and devoted the remaining years of his life to private scholarship. In 1891 he persuaded more than sixty people to attend the inaugural meeting of the new society, and for the next couple of years it was a viable organization devoted to pursuing the idea of folklore as an art form totally independent of its cultural milieu.

Bassett’s goal was to display folklore in an engaging manner. The folklorist should approach his data as a man of letters rather than one who enshrouded his materials in a coldly clinical scientific style. Because those in charge of the *Journal of American Folklore* were opposed to this idea, it was necessary to create a new folklore publishing outlet, so in July 1892 the *Folk-Lorist*, the official publication of the Chicago Folk-Lore Society, appeared. Bassett also produced the *Folk-Lore Manual* (1892) so that interested parties would know how to go about collecting lore. This publication elucidates Bassett’s concept of folklore more than any other source. Like many of his contemporaries, he believed that “the fast-decaying traditions of our native tribes and of the negroes and mixed races are the most important, and work among them, will, perhaps, bring the most abundant results.” He shared the view of folklore as data that were rapidly disappearing, but, unlike other scholars of the day, he maintained that oral traditions existed among all classes of human beings, not just among primitive and uncivilized people. He even suggested that railroading, telegraphy, and photography were three professions in which folklore could be found in abundance.

The Chicago Folk-Lore Society’s crowning achievement was the International Folk-Lore Congress held at the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. This gathering of scholars from around the world was intended to be of interest to the general public as

well as to academics. Although the meeting got off to a good start with a huge audience attending the first session, attendance by both the audience and the academic participants dwindled after the first day. Even the Chicago newspapers commented on the failure of speakers to show up. A greater problem for the society was Bassett's death shortly after the congress ended. In fact, his loss was fatal to the organization, because no one filled his role. Probably the main reason for this situation is that, except for Bassett, the other resident members were folklore dilettantes. In 1898 the *International Folk-Lore Congress of the World's Columbian Exposition*, containing papers from the 1893 congress, appeared, but by that time the society was, for all practical purposes, defunct.

With the demise of the Chicago Folk-Lore Society, the idea that folklore was a thing worthy of study in itself also ceased to be an actively espoused concept for nearly a half century. Ironically, though, the literary view of folklore won in a sense because most 20th-century folklorists were either trained or influenced by Stith Thompson (1885–1976) of Indiana University, and Archer Taylor (1890–1973) of University of California, Berkeley, who, while not following the literary approach advocated by the Chicago Folk-Lore Society, were literary folklorists nonetheless.

By the 1880s, folklore investigations of the American Indian were in full swing, even though by then the Native American had been examined by investigators of traditional culture for almost four centuries. After so long a time, seemingly every aspect of tribal culture would have received adequate consideration, but there was still one feature of Indian society that lacked intensive examination—music. This situation was soon rectified by a number of people, the first being Theodor Baker, a native of New York City who obtained a Ph.D. from the University of Leipzig with a dissertation based on songs he collected from Senecas in New York State and from members of various tribes at the Training School for Indian Youth at Carlisle, Pennsylvania. This volume was published in 1882 as *Über die Musik der nordamerikanischen Wilden* (On the Music of the North American Savages). Seventy-one melodies were printed, thirty-two of which were analyzed in some detail, but, despite the serious tone of Baker's book and its landmark importance in the history of ethnomusicology, it has remained obscure and little used. Baker's later lack of interest in Indian music and the fact that his volume was published in German both played a part in its general lack of recognition.

Far better known is the work of Alice Cunningham Fletcher (1838–1923), an erudite and urbane Bostonian, who almost reached middle age before starting work in ethnomusicology. Fletcher struggled to overcome her reaction to Indian music as “screeching cacophony” and her own preconceived ideas concerning “savage” music; she later admitted that she had been enslaved by her previous racially biased training. By 1891 she received a fellowship that enabled her to devote the rest of her life to her Indian studies, the best known of her publications being *A Study of Omaha Music* (1893). This work was also the major result of her collaboration with John Comfort Fillmore (1843–1898), who used the study to set forth his theory of primitive music. His was an elaborate, evolutionary scheme that proposed a single line of development for all cultures, based on the study of a specific culture. All music was constructed along “harmonic” lines, folk music differing from art music only in the manner of development. Therefore, all attempts to reduce primitive melodies to scales had to consider the natural harmonies involved. So convinced was Fillmore of this “natural harmonic basis” that he

provided harmonizations with the melodies he printed, not merely to make the music more “pleasing” to Western ears, but also to indicate the “true nature” of the tunes.

Fillmore never wavered from his theory, and it found acceptance among scholars primarily because it elevated Indian music to an artistic form worthy of respect. At the time, there was a prevailing attitude that the aborigines had no musical sense or genius, particularly when compared to the Negro. The Fillmore-Fletcher work, however, belied this, pointing out that all musics were essentially the same, just in different stages of development. After Fillmore’s death, Fletcher did not publicize his theory, perhaps because her own interests were more general. She produced one other major work, *The Hako: A Pawnee Ceremony* (1904).

Jesse Walter Fewkes (1850–1930) is important as the first American to utilize the phonograph in fieldwork, when in 1890 she used the then new invention to collect songs and tales of the Passamaquoddy tribe in Maine. A short time later, Frances Densmore (1867–1957), destined to become one of the most famous ethnomusicologists of her time, began her work with a collection of Chippewa music. At first she produced mainly popular works, but later she became a thoroughgoing scholar. Like many other ethnomusicologists, she also began to work in isolation from other published materials, as if no one else had ever written on the topics she treated.

Few collectors of Indian music had plans as ambitious as Natalie Curtis Burlin (1875–1921), who wanted to produce a book representative of all North American Indian music. Realizing this was an impossible task, she opted for one hundred forty-nine songs from eighteen tribes in *The Indians’ Book* (1907). She hoped the volume would demonstrate the “latent capabilities” of a people “utterly unlike any other in the world.” Further, she thought that Indian music would provide the art musician with “a new and vigorous art impulse” because the tribe members unconsciously tried “to make beautiful the things of daily living.” This possibility made it imperative that her publication be of a popular nature.

A number of classical composers essentially agreed with Burlin that Indian music could be utilized as the basis of artistic compositions. Among the leaders of this movement were Arthur Farwell (1872–1952), establisher of Wa-Wan Press, a venture committed to works developing in “interesting fashion” any indigenous folk music, Charles Wakefield Cadman (1881–1946), and Arthur Nevin (1871–1943). These, and other composers, arranged collections of Indian melodies, inspiring a movement that continued well into the 20th century and eventually included consideration of much more than just Indian music.

Another aspect of music received consideration when Francis James Child’s ten-volume collection, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, appeared in 1882 to 1898. Child (1825–1896) saw this as a work of cultural archaeology because he was convinced that ballad singing was a dead art. He was rescuing the cream of the crop from oblivion; hence the *The* in his title. Ironically, this summing up of the English and Scottish ballad tradition was done before any of the substantive work in Anglo folksong and ballad collecting had been done. In effect, Child motivated that fieldwork; it was almost as if collectors were intent on proving him wrong about ballad singing being a lost art. Consequently, for approximately fifty years after his final volume appeared, most fieldworkers set about recording variants and versions of Child ballads, *and little else*. An exception to this trend was Cecil Sharp (1859–1924), an Englishman who traveled the

southern Appalachians from 1916 to 1918 collecting all manner of songs that were of English derivation. Another exception was Vance Randolph, the most famous of Ozark folklorists, who spent approximately three decades collecting ballads and folksongs from Ozark mountaineers. Even Randolph, who thought everything sung by a folksinger was important, gave the highest priority to Child ballads, reserving the first volume of his mammoth *Ozark Folksongs* (1946–1950) to these gems.

The study of American dialect began in the 19th century, although, unlike other areas of folklore scholarship, this movement was an outgrowth of neither the Romantic movement nor anthropology, but philology. Most of those who investigated American dialect were ignorant of, or even uninterested in, other genres of oral tradition, a situation not unusual in the history of American folklore studies, so often a history of disunity rather than unity. For his *A Vocabulary or Collection of Words and Phrases which have been supposed to be peculiar to the United States of America* (1816), John Pickering (1777–1846) deserves credit as the first American dialectologist. More important, however, was John Russell Bartlett (1805–1886), whose *Dictionary of Americanisms* (1848) was a scholarly best-seller, appearing in two subsequent editions in 1859 and 1877. Bartlett's theory of dialects depicted them as originating in two ways. First, local language developed from the propinquity of nationalities speaking different tongues borrowing words and phrases from one another. A more fruitful and permanent source was migration, and its effects could be seen in England, where "the immigrations of various nations into Great Britain from the Saxons down to the period of the Norman conquest are yet distinctly marked in the dialects of that country." Thus, one could know beforehand exactly when and where variations from standard language could occur, important because Bartlett thought it only a matter of a few generations until the United States would witness a proliferation of dialects as marked as those of Great Britain.

Bartlett's collection and that of his protegee Maximilian Schele De Vere (1820–1898), who produced *Americanisms: The English of the New World* (1871), were gathered mainly from printed sources. This was not the case with Benjamin Homer Hall's *A Collection of College Words and Customs* (1851), a potpourri including everything from folk terms to an explanation of the Dudleian Lecture, an anniversary sermon preached at Harvard University, to a discussion of Harvard's merit system. Of course, Hall had to rely mainly on oral sources because many of the "odd words and queer customs" he sought were not written down. Even though he directed his attention to the unusual and the uncommon, Hall deserves credit not only for compiling one of the early works on dialect, but also for producing the first book dealing with college folklore.

In 1890, two years after the founding of the American Folklore Society, the American Dialect Society was established. Almost from the outset, one of the society's goals was to produce a dictionary that would provide "a complete record of American speech forms." Toward this goal, word lists from various areas of the United States appeared in virtually every issue of *Dialect Notes*, the organization's journal. Even so, more than one hundred years later the envisioned dialect dictionary has yet to appear, a testament to the difficulty of the task. What society members had in mind was something akin to Joseph Wright's six-volume *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898–1905), but the problems in this country are different from those encountered by Wright. Americans are more fluid, both geographically and socially, than Europeans, making the development of an extensive local speech more difficult. Distinctions between dialect and standard speech are also less

rigid in the New World; regional terms frequently appear in the usage of the educated; “illiterate” features repeatedly crop up in the works of local-color novelists. Compilers of general dictionaries have usually recognized these facts and included in their compilations a number of dialectal terms. America is also much larger, both geographically and demographically, and less homogeneous than England. Furthermore, when Wright started work, much of the labor had already been done in the form of published glossaries of English county dialects, and, in addition, local correspondents were available for consultation whenever needed.

Dialectologists made the same kinds of errors other folklorists committed, the basic one being an overcommitment to collecting and an undercommitment to gathering material in context. Motivated by a desire to recover every item of dialect before it was lost or by some other equally charitable goal, most collectors found little time or need to do more than provide a listing of materials. In one regard, however, dialectological work was ahead of most other folklore collecting done prior to the 20th century. Dialectologists never confined their subject matter to a savage or peasant state of society or, in fact, to any single group of people. They rightly saw it as belonging to all classes and periods of society. Had work in the many areas of folklore been more unified at the time, other scholars might have benefited from this attitude.

One final group of scholars active in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that deserve mention are what might be called “the overseas folklorists.” These were men like Charles Godfrey Leland (1824–1903), Jeremiah Curtin (1835–1906), and Lafcadio Hearn (1850–1904), who were peripatetic scholars who spent so much time in other parts of the globe that they never had time or opportunity to develop strong followings at home. Still, their contributions are significant in the history of American folklore studies, for their large number of publications, if nothing else.

Work in the various areas of folklore studies mentioned in this survey continued in the 20th century. These later works are covered in other entries of this encyclopedia, so are not repeated here.

W.K. McNeil

References

- Bassett, Fletcher. [1885] 1971. *Legends and Superstitions of the Sea and of Sailors*. Detroit: Singing Tree Press.
- Bisland, Elizabeth, ed. 1906. *The Life and Letters of Lafcadio Hearn*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Crane, Thomas Frederick. 1888. The Diffusion of Popular Tales. *Journal of American Folklore* 1:8–15.
- Darrah, William Culp. 1951. *Powell of the Colomdo*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Dundes, Alan. 1973. African Tales among the North American Indians. In *Mother Wit from the Laughing Barrel: Readings in the Interpretation of Afro-American Folklore*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, pp. 114–125.
- Fillmore, John Comfort. The Harmonic Structure of Indian Music. *American Anthropologist* 1:297–318.
- Goldschmidt, Walter, ed. 1959. *The Anthropology of Franz Boas*. Menasha, WI: American Anthropological Association.
- Hale, Horatio. 1890. “Above” and “Below”: A Mythological Disease of Language. *Journal of American Folklore* 3:177–190.

- Hofmann, Charles. 1968. *Frances Densmore and American Indian Music: A Memorial Volume*. New York: Museum of the American Indian.
- Judd, Neil. 1967. *The Bureau of American Ethnology: A Partial History*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Powell, John Wesley. 1895. The Interpretation of Folklore. *Journal of American Folklore* 8:97–105.
- Wallashek, Richard. 1893. *Primitive Music: An Inquiry into the Origin and Development of Music, Songs, Instruments, Dances, and Pantomimes of Savage Races*. London: Longmans, Green
- See also* American Studies and Folklore; Applied Folklore; Canadian Folklore Scholarship; Canadian Studies and Folklore; Comparative Approach; Contextual Approach; Cultural Studies; Ethnomusicology; Folklife Movement; Functionalism; Immigrant Folklore, Study of; Material Culture; Oral-Formulaic Approach; Performance Approach; Postmodernism; Psychology and Folklore; Semiotic Approach; Sociological Approach; Structural Approach

American Folklore Society

A scholarly association that exists to further the discipline of folklore studies. The society was founded in Boston in 1888 by such luminaries as Francis James Child, William Wells Newell, Daniel Garrison Brinton, and Franz Boas, with its principal emphasis directed toward the publication of a “scientific” journal and the convening of an annual meeting.

Generations of scholarly theories and approaches are reflected in the society’s publications, revealing the sometimes partisan leanings of its members toward folklore as literature or folklore as a subfield of anthropology. The *Journal of American Folklore* (*JAF*) has been published quarterly since 1888. It includes articles, notes, and commentaries; reviews of publications, films and videotapes, audio recordings, and exhibitions and events; and obituaries. The *Centennial Index* (1988; vol. 101, no. 402 of *JAF*) provides a serial listing of all *Journal* entries from 1888 to 1988, with author, title, and subject indexes.

Additional publications of the society include a Memoir Series of book-length monographs (1894–1975), a Bibliographical and Special Series (1950–1978), and a New Series (1980–). Titles in the New Series, judged by a publications series editor and outside readers to be outstanding in the field, are issued with the imprimatur of the American Folklore Society through various university presses.

The *American Folklore Society Newsletter* has been published bimonthly since 1971. This publication carries official news and reports of the society’s business, as well as a wide range of information relevant to the field generally. Regular features include listings of academic meetings, publication news, job notices, grant announcements, a cooperation column, prizes, and information on electronic media. Special features include columns on computer applications in folklore study, career opportunities, the status of funding for folklore in federal agencies, and folklore studies outside the United States. The preliminary program of each year’s annual meeting is published in the August issue of the *Newsletter*.

In recent years, the society has moved beyond the early dichotomy between literary and anthropological folklorists. It provides a common forum for folklorists working in academic settings and those working in the “public sector,” a term broadly applied to folklorists working in nonacademic positions such as federal, state, and local government agencies (such as arts or humanities funding agencies) or private non-profit organizations (such as museums or historical organizations). The need to bridge the academic and public sectors has prompted the society to sponsor an annual public-sector internship for a graduate student to gain experience working in a public-sector agency and a public-folklorist-in-residence program, which places experienced public folklorists in an academic setting to pursue individual research and interact with faculty and students. The residency program was developed in cooperation with Indiana University’s Folklore Institute. Future partners for this residency program include Utah State University and Western Kentucky University.

The society's annual meeting takes place in October in cities throughout the continental United States and occasionally Canada. The five-day gathering offers panels, forums and workshops, film and video screenings, book exhibitions, special events, and tours of folkloristic interest. The society offers several prizes to honor outstanding work in African American folklore studies, public folklore, and Francophone folklore studies. Additionally, sections of the AFS, which are interest groups of society members, offer separate prizes. In 1995, there were approximately thirty such sections, addressing folklore genres (such as dance, folk arts, folk belief, folk narrative, foodways, and music), folklore of particular folk groups (such as African, American Indian, Baltic, British, Catholic, children, gay and lesbian, Italian, Jewish, Latino, occupational, and women), and professional issues (such as computer applications, graduate students, journals, social justice, and public programs). Sections meet at the annual meeting. Many of them sponsor sessions, offer prizes, and issue newsletters or journals of their own. Several sections maintain electronic bulletin boards, as does the society itself, available via a gopher at the University of Texas-Pan American.

The American Folklore Society is governed by an executive board composed of nine members plus the president and the president-elect, as set forth in the society's by-laws. An executive secretary-treasurer is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the society's business. The society's papers and records are archived at Utah State University's Library, Special Collections Division. These archives are indexed and are accessible for research.

Additional information about the society can be obtained by contacting the American Folklore Society, 4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 640, Arlington, VA 22203.

Shalom D. Staub

References

- Clements, William M., ed. 1988. *One Hundred Years of American Folklore Studies: A Conceptual History*. Washington, DC: American Folklore Society.
- Dwyer-Shick, Susan. 1979. *The American Folklore Society and Folklore Research in America, 1888–1940*. Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania.
- Newell, William W. 1888. On the Field and Work of a Journal of American Folk-Lore. *Journal of American Folklore* 1:3–7. Reprinted in *Journal of American Folklore* 101:56–59, 1988.
- Zumwalt, Rosemary Lévy. 1988. *American Folklore Scholarship: A Dialogue of Dissent*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- See also* American Folklore Scholarship: The Early Years

American Studies and Folklore

Scholarly connection interpreting traditions shaped by experiences and settings in the United States. American studies arose during the 1930s with folklore research as an important component. This interdisciplinary academic movement strove to interpret American society in a national perspective by combining American history, literature, and culture. The driving mission of identifying a national tradition led many American-studies scholars to folklore research, which had been used in Europe to examine the cultural basis of regions and nations.

A basic split occurred in early American-studies scholarship between those examining a distinctively national folklore, thus underscoring the case for an American exceptionalism, and those emphasizing the adaptation of international folk traditions on the American scene, thus suggesting a multicultural society. Since the 1980s, the argument has shifted to issues of multiple identities held by Americans, often expressed through folklore and the processes of cultural production.

Before Harvard University established the first formal degree-granting program for American studies in 1936, a substantial shelf of American-studies scholarship using folklore research had emerged. Constance Rourke (1885–1941) published *American Humor* in 1931 and cited American folklore—including traditionally learned tall tales and legends of tricksters and “ringtailed roarers”—as the distinguishing influence on American literary humor. Rourke believed that a distinctive American folklore formed out of the special circumstances of the new nation, such as its frontier. This folklore influenced the rise of an American literature based on vernacular characters such as James Fenimore Cooper’s Leather-stocking and traditional themes such as “rags to riches” and the “noble and ignoble savage.” In fact, she observed that the American tradition—in art, architecture, and literature—overall contained a unity of folk or vernacular spirit. For Martha Warren Beckwith (1871–1959), formerly a colleague of Rourke’s at Vassar College, American society was too diverse and derived too greatly from foreign sources to describe as a single tradition. Established as America’s first chair of folklore at Vassar, Beckwith outlined many living ethnic and religious “strains in the process of creating an American cultural life” in *Folklore in America* (1931).

Henry Nash Smith, the first graduate of Harvard’s History of American Civilization program, examined folklore sources of Edward Eggleston and Mark Twain, among other American fiction writers, in his dissertation, which led to the influential book *Virgin Land* (1950). In his work, Smith introduced an American-studies approach of “myth, symbol, and image,” drawn largely from folkloristic ideas of the consciousness-building powers of cultural mythology, and he used the development of the American West, an interest he credited to Texas folklorist J. Frank Dobie (1888–1964), to demonstrate his approach. American “myths,” scholars such as Smith and Russell Nye held, were not narrative texts in the usual sense; they were driving concepts or “collective representations” that unified Americans; examples were Smith’s “myth of the garden” (power of Americans to transform wilderness and desert into a new Eden-like garden)

and Nye's "myth of superabundance" (popular belief that resources are endless in America).

Smith suggested that historical patterns such as the westward movement were influenced by such myths and the lore and literature that arose from them. Philip D. Jordan pointed out, for example, that terms such as "manifest destiny" in the American experience were folk mottos of crucial themes that characterized the "essential narrative of this nation" (Jordan 1946). Such themes included westward movement, immigration, and industrialization. To this list, Nye added character traits of individualism, free enterprise, and progressivism that are evident in the nation's emergent folklore.

Smith encouraged the folklore research of Richard M. Dorson (1916–1981), a fellow graduate student at Harvard, who went on to become the strongest voice within folklore studies for building a relation to American studies. As director of Indiana University's Ph.D.-granting Folklore Institute, Dorson guided many students (he claimed he directed more than 200 dissertations) and devoted many books, especially *American Folklore* (1959), *American Folklore and the Historian* (1971), *America in Legend* (1973), *Man and Beast in American Comic Legend* (1982), and two special issues of the *Journal of the Folklore Institute* (1978, 1980) to the conceptualization of "American folklore" as opposed to "folklore in America." His work followed an agenda set out in "A Theory for American Folklore" presented in 1957 at the first joint meeting of the American Studies Association and the American Folklore Society (see Dorson 1978). He called attention to a unique set of historical forces—exploration and colonization, Revolution and the establishment of a democratic republic, westward movement, immigration, slavery and the Civil War, and industrialization and technology—that "shaped and created new folklore, or new adaptations of old folklore themes" peculiar to American society.

Dorson argued, for example, that the case of Davy Crockett required the perspective of both folklore and American studies. The frontier, he wrote, not only bred "new species of men and new institutions remote from European influences, but it cradled folk heroes and released a flood of legends" (Dorson 1971:32). Other "unique" heroes he described were Mike Fink the Keelboatman, Mose the Bowery B'hoy, Sam Patch the Mill Hand, Yankee Jonathan the Countryman, and Gib Morgan the Oil Field Liar. The folklore of these figures represented a new national consciousness. In *America in Legend*, he fashioned a history of the United States that followed the development of American folklore. The "religious impulse" represented by lore of providences, witchcraft, and judgments characterized the colonial period. The democratic impulse represented by ring-tailed roarers and folk heroes characterized the early national period. In the later national period, the economic impulse dominated and fostered lore of cowboys, lumberjacks, miners, oil drillers, and railroaders. In the contemporary period, Dorson concentrated on the folklore of youth culture and its "humane impulse."

Besides helping to frame a history or narrative of the United States, the connection of folklore to American studies held a methodological and theoretical significance. In the introductory textbook *Folklore and Folklife* (1972), Dorson divided the folklore of the Old and New Worlds for analytical purposes. Espousing a nationalistic approach, Dorson asserted that "the folklore of each New World country needs to be analyzed in terms of its ethnic-racial and historical ingredients" (Dorson 1972:44). In addition, he emphasized "special historical and environmental factors that have shaped traditions." Accordingly, in the *Handbook of American Folklore* (1983), Dorson further organized folklore in

relation to American studies. At the outset are “American Experiences” followed by “American Cultural Myths” and “American Settings.” These categories lead to a consideration of “American Entertainments” and “American Forms and Performers” as preludes to the “Interpretation of Research.”

Folklore, Dorson and others argued, was especially convincing evidence because it represented deep-seated values and long-standing beliefs held by a society. Alan Dundes, who had studied with Dorson, especially developed the concept of “folk ideas as units of world view” and examined folk ideas basic to American national character. For example, he made a case for the future orientation of Americans as well as their reliance on the number three (Dundes 1980). He called for American studies to be more comparative and cross-cultural in its use of folklore as evidence of national character.

As the historically oriented Constance Rourke had her detractor in Martha Beckwith, so, too, did Dorson have challenges from folklorists seeking less of a nationalistic connection to American studies. Collections such as *Folklore in America* (1966), edited by Tristram Potter Coffin and Hennig Cohen, and *Folklore on the American Land* (1972), edited by Duncan Emrich (1908–1977), emphasized the continuities of folklore in America with sources elsewhere rather than the existence of a distinctive “American folklore.” Jan Harold Brunvand’s introductory textbook *The Study of American Folklore* (1968) took a middle ground in the debate covering both folklore traditions “found in” America and those “originated” there.

Writing in *American Quarterly*, Richard Bauman and Roger D. Abrahams with Susan Kalcik (1976) reiterated the split between American folklore and folklore in America and surveyed the familiar categories of region, ethnicity, race, occupation, and genre. They closed with attention to “a social interactional perspective, centering around the notion of performance,” that they believed was modifying the traditional organizing principles of American folklorists. Influenced by anthropological approaches to linguistics and communication, in this perspective researchers observed varying individual “performances” of traditional behavior influenced by the immediate sociocultural context. The performance-centered approach led to more consideration of the lives of individual American folk performers and artists from a wide range of backgrounds and the processes for learning and expressing folklore under various American conditions. Thus, Bauman, Abrahams, and Kalcik pointed to studies of biography, repertoire, and performance style of folk performers leading to increased interest in “community, locale, and personal experience as formative influences” in diverse American contexts.

In the attention to community and personal experience, scholars implied a shift in the mission of American studies from one of uncovering, in Rourke’s words, the “common storage of experience and character,” usually centered on literary arts, to one of seeking to describe American lives and identities, centered on everyday cultural practice. This shift suggested leaving behind the issue of whether American traditions were created or imported (seen as a process, they are both), and moved to the complex use of traditions by and for individuals in various settings that are part of American life. Additionally, inquiry followed the ways that Americans carry multiple identities through their lives and the patterns of forming, expressing, and manipulating those identities. This kind of inquiry opened American Studies to global applications, since these identities are in question when Americans or American expressions enter into surroundings outside the United States.

If there has been a trend since the 1970s, it has been that writing on folklore in American studies appeared more “ethnographic.” The basis of fieldwork using interview and observation to describe the communication of symbols among people in contemporary cultural scenes became increasingly important. The ethnographic orientation of folklife and material culture with its uncovering of cultural persistence and diversity was notably added to the folkloristic relation to American studies (Bronner 1992; Glassie 1968). With the addition of folklife and material culture, a rejuvenation of the historical component of tradition was evident, thus forming a new folkloristic synthesis of art, literature, culture, and history (Bronner 1986). Rather than trying to describe America as a whole, scholars turned more attention to describing the complexity of American scenes and people that influence, and have influenced, the sense of the whole and its parts. Thus, studies of Louisiana Cajuns, Pennsylvania Germans, city firefighters, and corporate humorists were all “American studies” that connected to cultural studies in parts of the United States and abroad. Implying the importance of social identities, these studies were complemented by a movement in folklore and folklife research to consider the importance of settings and practices they suggest (schools, workplaces, and leisure spots, for example) within the common scenes of American life.

Particularly in its emphasis on the processes of “tradition” in sociocultural context, folklore and folklife research significantly contributed to American studies by identifying longstanding values and beliefs inherent in socially shared expressions that connect to individual lives as part of the American experience. Judging from the keywords in American studies to describe American life, during the 1970s the anthropological and folkloristic “culture” replaced the humanistic “civilization.” The increasing use of folkloristic terms such as “tradition,” “narrative,” and “folkways” in American studies suggests a more behavioral understanding of American experiences (see Jones 1982). Examining the symbolism of American images and artifacts from wildlife to the New Jersey Turnpike, American-studies scholars have included folklore as a means to analyze the rhetorical meaning of ways that Americans present themselves (Gillespie and Mechling 1987; Gillespie and Rockland 1989).

Another indication of the scholarly appeal of folklore in American studies has been the rise of folklore and folklife courses in American-studies programs and departments from a few in 1971 to 13 percent of all folklore courses offered in the United States in 1986. The previous domination of ballad and song gave way to American folklore and folklife as the dominant folkloristic subject taught in American colleges (26 percent) just behind the introductory course (Baker 1971, 1986). Indiana University allows for a joint Ph.D. degree in folklore and American studies, and George Washington University offers a folklife program within the American studies Ph.D. Other American studies Ph.D. granting institutions, such as the University of Pennsylvania, the University of New Mexico, Bowling Green State University, and Michigan State University, have strong folkloristic components.

In American studies, folklore studies are used to demonstrate the persistence and diversity of America’s social groups and the interplay between folk and popular cultures. In the area of folksong, for example, where previously studies of British-American balladry dominated, significant new research has considered the theme of railroads in American country music (Cohen 1981) and the cultural meanings of blues (Oliver 1984). Ethnic folk music received its due in American studies with studies of klezmer, polka,

and Cajun music. In keeping with the trend toward community and personal experience, many of the newer titles use the keyword of “makers” to draw attention to individual performers in the process of cultural production. Other identities such as age, gender, disability, and sexual preference are the subjects of study in other genres such as legend, humor, and proverb. With the influence of folklife study, American-studies scholarship also has studies that explore a number of different expressions, tangible and intangible, in the round of everyday life within communities.

Besides expanding the range of folklore to folklife concerns of material culture and community life, researchers increasingly seek out the multiple cultures that interact in an American commonwealth. American folklorists increasingly ask questions about the influences of tradition on the behaviors and identities that Americans take on in many settings, organizational and physical, in the United States and abroad. The guiding problem for the relation of folklore and folklife research to American studies no longer revolves exclusively around the simplistic opposition of imported and emergent traditions, an opposition that in its formation seeks to create an American exceptionalism. Instead, the main problem statement concerns the rhetorical uses of traditions from various perspectives—the individual, the community, the region, the nation. The goal of interpreting cultural process and social context historically and ethnographically undergirds many new American studies of traditions. The promise of these studies is their inquiry into the adaptive nature of everyday lives and the ways that these lives represent the American experiences.

Simon J. Bronner

References

- Baker, Ronald L. 1971. Folklore Courses and Programs in American Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* 84:221–229.
- . 1986. Folklore and Folklife Studies in American and Canadian Colleges and Universities. *Journal of American Folklore* 99:50–74.
- Bauman, Richard, Roger D. Abrahams, and Susan Kalcik. 1976. American Folklore and American Studies. *American Quarterly* 28:360–77.
- Bronner, Simon J., ed. [1985] 1992. *American Material Culture and Folklife*. Logan: Utah State University Press.
- . 1986. *Grasping Things: Folk Material Culture and Mass Society in America*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- . 1993. Exploring American Traditions: A Survey of Folklore and Folklife Research in American Studies. *American Studies International* 31.
- Bronner, Simon J., and Stephen Stern. 1980. American Folklore vs. Folklore in America: A Fixed Fight? *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 17:76–84.
- Cohen, Norm. 1981. *Long Steel Rail: The Railroad in American Folksong*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Dorson, Richard M. 1976. *The Birth of American Studies*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- . 1978. Folklore in America vs. American Folklore. *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 15:97–112.
- , ed. 1980. The America Theme in American Folklore. *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 18, nos. 2–3.
- Dundes, Alan. 1980. *Interpreting Folklore*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

- Georges, Robert A., special ed. 1989. Richard M. Dorson's Views and Works: An Assessment. *Journal of Folklore Research* (Special Issue) 26, no. 3.
- Gillespie, Angus K., and Jay Mechling, eds. 1987. *American Wildlife in Symbol and Story*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Gillespie, Angus K., and Michael Aaron Rockland. 1989. *Looking for America on the New Jersey Turnpike*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Glassie, Henry. 1968. *Pattern in the Material Folk Culture of the Eastern United States*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Hufford, Mary. 1991. *American Folklife: A Commonwealth of Cultures*. Washington, DC: American Folklife Center.
- Jones, Michael Owen. 1982. Another America: Toward a Behavioral History Based on Folkloristics. *Western Folklore* 41:43–51.
- Jordan, Philip D. 1946. Toward a New Folklore. *Minnesota History* 27:273–280.
- Nye, Russell B. 1966. *This Almost Chosen People: Essays in the History of American Ideas*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press.
- Oliver, Paul. 1984. *Songsters and Saints: Vocal Traditions on Race Records*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- See also* Academic Programs in Folklore; Canadian Studies and Folklore

Anansi

Also “Ananse,” “Anancy,” and “Nansi,” the spider trickster of West and Central Africa. Anansi is so popular a character in this great body of tales that, even when he does not appear, they are called *Anansesem* (Ananse stories) by the Akan-speakers of Ghana and the Côte d’Ivoire. Although Anansi usually has spider characteristics, to make matters even more complicated for scholars he can also turn into a human, and conversely, other animals such as a rabbit, a fox, and a hare sometimes take over his role in popular stories. Indeed, he was first known to most European Americans as the trickster Brer Rabbit in Joel Chandler Harris’ 19th-century literary retellings of African (and non-African) Uncle Remus stories. Although Anansi stories and other African tales have been collected and published since the first quarter of the 19th century, they reached a wider non-African audience through Cronise and Ward’s *Cunny Rabbit, Mr. Spider, and the Other Beef* (1903), Beckwith’s *Jamaica Anansi Stories* (1924), and Rattray’s comprehensive collection, *Akan-Ashanti Folk-Tales* (1930).

Known from Senegal to Angola in Africa, and throughout the African Diaspora in the Caribbean, northern South America, and the United States, Anansi is ‘Ti Malice in Haiti, Boy Nasty and B’Rabby in the Bahamas, Nansi in Curaçao, Aunt Nancy and Miss Nancy on the Carolina/Georgia Coast, and he can be a girl, a boy, or an old man or woman rather than a spider. In the Anglophone Caribbean, particularly Jamaica and Trinidad, his stories are often told as an entertainment during the overnight rituals associated with wakes for the dead; in Suriname, they are told only at night during wakes.

Most commonly, Anansi is a wily, cunning spider with human abilities such as speech, who uses his insect characteristics such as his sticky web, his eight feet, and his ability to descend rapidly from a ceiling, to attain his goals or save his life. He plots and plans, using every kind of clever and amoral duplicity to satisfy his greed, but he is sometimes outwitted or bested by other animals. Some stories explain how spiders were created, while others feature Anansi as a kind of culture hero who steals the sun for humankind and tricks the sky god into giving him these stories.

One of the most famous Anansi stories is how he tricked Tiger through cajolery, while pretending to be ill and weak, into letting him ride him complete with saddle, bridle, and whip. In another, a farmer catches thieving Anansi by putting a tar baby, or gumdoll, in his field. When the doll does not answer Anansi’s greeting, he slaps it and his hand sticks, then he kicks it when it won’t release his hand, so when the farmer catches him, he beats him flat, thus explaining how spiders came to be flat. Although many of the tales are adult in content, and far from edifying in their trickery, their tremendous range of character and action explains why they have kept their appeal and are constantly being “retold” by writers of children’s books. Even so, African American artist John Biggers, in *Ananse: The Web of Life in Africa* (1962), sees Ananse as depicting “...every kind of hero. There is an Ananse story for every situation in life. God gave Ananse the meaning of order.”

Daniel J. Crowley

References

Bascom, William. 1992. *African Folktales in the New World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Anecdote

Single-episode, believed folk narrative, especially one centering on a particular individual. The word originally meant “things unpublished or secret” and referred to the actions and sayings of famous people that were not included in their official biographies. Anecdotes often focus on things said in a particularly witty or effective way, such as the line attributed to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill when told by a female member of Parliament that, if he were her husband, she would poison his tea. “Madam,” he is said to have answered, “if I were your husband I would drink it.” As this example illustrates, anecdotes are typically humorous, but they should be distinguished from jokes, which are understood to be fictive by their tellers and hearers. In effect, anecdotes are to legends as jokes are to folktales, shortened or crystallized equivalents; unlike many legends, however, they do not involve the supernatural.

The folk anecdote has parallels in the written literary tradition that go back at least to the great 14th-century English anthology of illustrative stories of the Roman emperors, called the *Gesta Romanorum*, which was printed in Latin. Such “ana,” or published collections of anecdotes, grew to great popularity in 17th- and 18th-century Europe, where they focused primarily on famous living personalities rather than historical ones.

The usual subject matter of serious anecdotal narratives, whether folk or published, is revealed in the headings Stith Thompson’s *Motif Index of Folk-Literature* (1955–1958) gives for the genre—social types and relationships, wise and unwise conduct, and rewards and punishments. The subject matter of humorous anecdotes includes such things as great lies, ludicrous mistakes, escapes, exaggerations, tricks, practical jokes, and especially the well-put or stinging verbal comebacks of clever people.

While anecdotes often concern famous individuals—generals, politicians, kings, actors, and the like—some ordinary individuals gain folk fame based solely on their sayings and deeds that generate anecdotes among their group. The exploits of one Charlie Ferg, for example, which constitute a local genre of folklore in southwest Wisconsin’s Ocooch Mountains, are basically a set of this ne’er-do-well’s one-line responses to judgments against him by community moralists. In one narrative, Charlie stumbled by a group of church members on his way home from a tavern one night, and a deacon asked him if he had found Jesus. “Why no, Deacon,” he replied, “I didn’t know he was lost!”

Besides their entertainment value, both folk and literary anecdotes of this type often serve moral purposes as well, as the following narrative about Thomas Jefferson shows. It was collected by Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers in Virginia in the 1930s: “Jefferson with one of his friends was in a town near Washington while he was president and met an old colored an’ weather-beaten slave, who bowed nearly to his knees to him. The President in turn bowed to him and spoke kindly to him and drew him into conversation. He saw that the military officer with him did not like the idea of his talking to the old negro so kindly, so he said ‘Shame on you my man, I would not want an aged slave to have more manners than I. And furthermore, he was more polite to me than you are to disapprove of my behavior.’” Testimony to the folk nature of this

anecdote is the fact that it is printed in Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery* attributed to George Washington and in Benjamin A. Botkin's *Treasury of Southern Folklore* (1949) attributed to Robert E. Lee. While, as this indicates, anecdotal narratives do float, they tend to attach themselves to individuals of similar characteristics, such as the "great gentlemen" named above, or to men such as Albert Einstein and Bertrand Russell as representing the type of "the genius." Both men are said to have been approached by beautiful women to have sex with them—to bear a child with "my body and your brains." Each man is said to have replied, "What if [it] turns out the other way around?"

There are vast numbers of folk, popular, and literary anecdotes in circulation. Perhaps the anecdote is such an active genre of narrative in American society because of its brevity and focus on individual personality, both of which are amenable features to contemporary culture.

Thomas E. Barden

References

- Barden, Thomas E., ed. 1991. *Virginia Folk Legends*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press.
 Botkin, Benjamin A., ed. 1949. *Treasury of Southern Folklore*. New York: Crown.
 Leary, James, ed. 1991. *Midwestern Folk Humor*. Litde Rock, AR: August House.
See also Local-Character Anecdote

Anglo Americans

Arguably the largest and most influential group of Americans sharing an ethnic heritage, yet for that very reason the least self-identified and least likely to be perceived as an ethnic group. The predominance of the English among the earliest American settlers; the consequent distance in time between many contemporary English-surnamed Americans and their original English emigrant ancestors; the extensive adoption and adaptation of English beliefs, practices, institutions, and language in the United States; enmity between Great Britain and America throughout the 19th century; and the universal tendency of dominant social groups to perceive themselves as the norm and only others as “ethnic” have all militated against identification of Anglo Americans as a culturally distinct group within American society. Americans of English descent have more cultural sanction than persons of other backgrounds to consider themselves simply “American” rather than “Anglo American.” Similarly, English folkways that have survived in the United States have been reidentified as American rather than English.

In comparison to their likely numbers by some measures, Anglo Americans are under-represented as a self-identified ethnic group. Indeed, they are nearly invisible in the United States today. Ascertaining the size of any ethnic population is necessarily problematic and the process is especially complex in a country like the United States where the philosophy of the melting pot (although periodically challenged by xenophobia and prejudice) has made intermarriage among the many different emigrant groups relatively easy, so most citizens trace a multi-ethnic ancestry. More importantly, in any country, ostensibly objective measures like the sources of surnames or even the national origin of ancestors (if discoverable) may not correspond with the determinative factor, the individual’s self-identification as a member of a particular group. Individuals who identify themselves as members of an ethnic group must perceive that this will confer benefits that will more than compensate for the disadvantages of being seen by others as “ethnic,” that is, non-mainstream.

For persons of English descent in the United States, except for very recent arrivals, there is and has been little need or reward for identifying oneself as Anglo American. In the 1990 Census, respondents were asked to report the ancestry group or groups with which they most closely identified. Out of the total U.S. population of 248,709,873, 32.7 million people claimed English ancestry (13%), the third largest group after German: 57.9 million (23%), and Irish: 38.7 million (15.5%). Another 12.4 million (5%) said their ancestry was “American.” Given the preponderance of the English among early emigrants and thus among the longest-settled American families and the preponderance of English surnames in many parts of the country, it appears that Americans with English ancestry are less likely to see that as a significant part of their current identity than do those with ancestral connections to other nationalities. In folklore fieldwork, researchers commonly find that persons asked to identify their ethnic heritage will name other ancestry (regardless of the extent to which they actually retain the traditional practices of

a particular ethnic group), but if their background is mostly English (or to a lesser extent from the rest of the British Isles) they will label themselves “plain white American.”

During the 17th century English emigrants formed the great majority of arrivals in the American colonies. Protestant dissenters fled the religious persecution that was not legally rescinded in England until 1689. In the southern colonies, farm laborers, domestic servants, and artisans seeking to improve their fortunes could make a start in the new world without capital by going into indentured service. Not until the 1680s did increased importation of African slaves displace English emigrants for plantation work. During the 18th century, the balance of emigration shifted so that the number of French, Germans, Scots, and Scotch-Irish arriving in the colonies together exceeded the number of new English arrivals. Population grew fastest during this period in the middle colonies and by the end of the colonial period more than half the inhabitants of Pennsylvania were not of English birth, but in most areas the English still formed between 60 percent and 80 percent of the white population. In the course of one hundred and seventy years of colonial rule the English language as well as many aspects of English common law, the tradition of representative government, the acceptance of multiple Protestant sects, and English trade practices became firmly ensconced. Despite modifications required by new circumstances, the heritage of the majority of inhabitants and the continued colonial linkages with Great Britain assured the establishment of an essentially English culture.

The struggle for American independence, the Revolutionary War, and the bitter War of 1812 not only severed the legal connection between mother and daughter countries, but ushered in a century of enmity and rivalry between the United States and Britain. It was only during World War II that the special relationship between the two countries, which now feels timeless and inevitable, was reestablished. Alexis de Toqueville, chronicling the unique character of Americans and their democratic experiment, remarked that it was difficult to imagine a more intense hatred than that of Americans for England. The similarity of worldview and shared cultural heritage remained, but the 19th century was the time in which Americans set out to forge a separate cultural identity. Americans envied English eminence both in commerce and in culture and desired to supplant their mother/rival in both. In the realm of commerce, England could and did place obstacles in America’s path. While resenting the interference, American business sought its own success by emulating the English model and establishing duplicate institutions. In the realm of culture, in contrast, Americans rejected the English heritage. “Our day of dependence, our long apprenticeship to the learning of other lands, draws to a close,” wrote Ralph Waldo Emerson in “The American Scholar” (1837). And Walt Whitman, in the 1855 Preface to *Leaves of Grass*, predicted that America would inspire new poets to create a new and superior literature, neither partisan nor nationalistic nor parochial, but built on healthy, natural models. Developments in the course of the century fostered general awareness of a distinct American language and a distinct American brand of humor as well as a desire not only to create arts to represent the American landscape and society but to do so in a distinct and appropriate American style (see Spencer 1957 and Crapol 1973).

In such a climate, American citizens of English ancestry tended to jettison any lingering sense of ethnic affiliation and to identify themselves as purely “American” and their accomplishments as contributions to American society. Entries in



Rebecca King Jones, noted for singing a fine version of the English ballad "Barbara Allen." Crab Tree Creek, Piedmont region, North Carolina, 1941. Photo Frank Warner. American Folklife Center.

this volume on other American ethnic groups enumerate the names of group members who played important roles in the development of American society. The same might be done for Anglo Americans, from the scholars of early New England to the Founding Fathers to the most influential authors of the new American literature to 19th-century

industrialists and Suffragists, except that all of these consciously acted not as members of an ethnic subgroup, not as persons of English extraction, but as Americans centrally defining what America and Americans should be.

The hatred of England that flourished during the 19th century was focused, however, on the British government and British commercial interests. Individual English men and women who emigrated to the U.S. in several economically-influenced waves were rarely penalized or judged too harshly because of their place of origin. Commonality of language, religion, customs, and institutions made for ease of contact and rapid acceptance and intermarriage between English emigrants and native-born Americans. In rural areas in the Midwest, English colonies and churches rarely survived with that identity for more than a generation or two unless there was a substantial influx of additional English people to the same area. Fast-growing western cities offered the English opportunities for upward mobility that also militated against ethnic organizing. In eastern cities St. George's Societies were longer-lived, but were relatively uninfluential as well as limited to a small elite. Only in the mining and industrial districts of the East were the English successful in founding institutions (often to distinguish themselves from the Irish), but these trade unions, cooperatives, and lodges were inherently more class- than ethnicity-based, so those that thrived quickly lost their all-English character. English workers also were more likely than other emigrants to move up in the class hierarchy, which further discouraged the maintenance of strong ethnic ties. By the end of the century the English had a far less organized social institutional life than the other large emigrant groups of the time, the Irish and Germans (see Erickson 1972 and 1980).

Along with more formal institutions like English legal practices, many English crafts and folkways were transported to this country and many survive. Those that have been retained as mainstream traditions, however, have mostly been stripped of their ethnic associations. Who now recalls that Christmas carolling was originally an English practice? Even in rural communities where more elements of traditional English culture were preserved for longer, practitioners of the traditional arts came to see them as American after a few generations. Folklore scholars may recognize a North Carolina version of "Barbara Allen" as an originally English text and tune given a few American details, but neither the singer from whom it was collected nor the general public with whom it has been popularized by revivalist performers is likely to think of it as anything but American. The same can be said for many ballads, songs, and fiddle tunes from the British Isles, as well as Jack Tales, quilting techniques, split white oak basketry, and the contra dancing developed from English country dancing. Contemporary folklore theory would argue that a practice adapted and perpetuated in a new country should be regarded as a part of the folklore of that country rather than only of the source country. Customs from other sources have also undergone a similar Americanization process: consider the African banjo and the German Christmas tree. Nevertheless, English customs and crafts seem most readily detached from their origins, perhaps because they are associated instead with an internal pseudo-ethnic group, Appalachian people.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there was a resurgence of interest among middle- and upper-class Americans in the preservation of English bloodlines and old English traditions in the United States and an interest in Appalachia as a repository of both. This concern was constructed, however, so as to emphasize the supposed superiority of the English heritage (social and genetic) with which most "mainstream"

Americans would implicitly identify themselves without explicitly connecting the elite, professional, and business classes of the North and Midwest with poor Appalachian mountaineers nor in any sense classifying the bulk of Americans of English descent as an Anglo American ethnic group equivalent to other ethnics. As western European emigration slowed and increasing numbers of poor immigrants from eastern and southern Europe arrived in the United States toward the end of the 19th century, xenophobic and racist elements complained of the “pollution” of the American genetic pool and advocated the uplift and incorporation of Appalachian people because they could supply a fresh stream of citizens of “the very best American type,” (that is, of Anglo-Saxon genetic heritage).

A number of the philanthropic efforts aimed at improving the lot of Appalachian people were based on the assumption that these people (until touched by recent modern influences) had retained an essentially old English culture and would thrive if they could be restored as an Anglo American folk enclave. Appalachian scholars now see these schemes as misguided, especially to the extent that they sought to “return” mountain inhabitants to a mythical simple, wholesome, preindustrial English rural lifestyle. Attempts to get contemporary mountaineers to carve and weave and dance English ritual dances and sing only the old songs impeded the people’s own efforts to acquire the skills necessary to advance in a changing marketplace. This construction of events in the mountains also obscured political awareness that the supposed “corruption” of a rural folk by modern culture was a less serious problem than the depredations of huge timber and mining companies that exploited local resources without regard for the well-being of the inhabitants. While the antique quality of Appalachian culture was celebrated, those who made a good living from the culture were the musicians who parlayed their skills into the uniquely American form now known as Country Music (see Whisnant 1983).

The nascent field of American folklore study played a part in the identification and paradoxical definition of Anglo American culture in the late 19th century. The English ballad scholar Cecil Sharp and others following his lead discovered remnants of English traditional music in the Appalachians, thereby bolstering the public sense that this was a bastion of Anglo American culture. At the same time, folklorists drew a distinction between English folklore in America and folklore from other sources. The lead article in the first issue of the *Journal of American Folklore* (1888) advocated:

The collection of the fast-vanishing remains of Folk-Lore in America, namely:

- (a) Relics of Old English Folk-Lore (ballads, tales, superstitions, dialect, etc.).
- (b) Lore of Negroes in the Southern States of the Union.
- (c) Lore of the Indian Tribes of North America (myths, tales, etc.).
- (d) Lore of French Canada, Mexico, etc.

It was entirely in keeping with the theories of the day to regard folklore as something produced only in Europe or only by peasants and thus as something that existed in America only in the form of survivals that could not last. Notably, however, the *JAF* statement of purpose identifies African Americans, Native Americans, French Canadian Americans and Mexican Americans as peoples possessing as a group their own proper (and living) lore. In contrast, Anglo Americans are not named and “Relics of Old English Folk-Lore” are presented as existing entirely independently of any folk community. There might be English lore existing among the general population, but that did not make

these people (unless they were Appalachian mountaineers) Anglo American ethnics or Anglo American folk.

One should also note that in practice the term “Anglo American” is not necessarily restricted to persons of English descent. In general usage and even in scholarly usage it is often employed as a more euphonious alternative to “British American.” Thus “Anglo American folksongs” includes songs of Scottish and possibly Irish origin. Likewise works on the migration of English, Scots, Irish, and Scotch Irish settlers into the Appalachian region sometimes differentiate the streams but often lump the groups as Anglo American. In Texas and the Hispanic Southwest, the abbreviated version, “Anglo,” is applied to indicate any person of other than Hispanic descent and may thus be used to refer not only to European Americans of other than English descent, but also to African Americans.

The invisibility of Anglo Americans is a complex political and historical phenomenon, resting equally on the predominance of English cultural influences in the formative years of the nation, the need of the daughter country to create a separate identity from her mother, and the tendency of dominant groups to see themselves as unmarked and others as ethnic. Even today, with the upsurge of ethnic pride movements and the institutionalization of anti-racist practices, a curious relation to the English component of our national heritage persists. Not only in Canada, where the linkages to English culture are more recent and obvious (see Greenhill 1994), but also in the United States, the mainstream implicit assumption of superiority rests to a considerable, if diminishing, extent on identification with the original English cultural and genetic heritage, while this identification must be erased or denied and people of English background must be cast as non-ethnic to preserve their rights to dominate the society.

Patrida E. Sawin

Refereaces

- Crapol, Edward P. 1973. *America for Americans: Economic Nationalism and Anglophobia in the Late Nineteenth Century*. Westport, CT, and London: Greenwood Press.
- Erickson, Charlotte J. 1972. *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America*. Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press.
- . 1980. English. In *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 319–336.
- Greenhill, Pauline. 1994. *Ethnicity in the Mainstream: Three Studies of English Canadian Culture in Ontario*. Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen’s University Press.
- Reddy, David, Riki Saltzman, Bob Stone, and Debbie Fant. 1991. “Rediscoveries”: African-American and Anglo-Celtic-American Traditions in Florida. In *Thirty-Ninth Annual Florida Folklife Festival*. Bureau of Florida Folklife Programs, pp. 6–10.
- Spencer, Benjamin T. 1957. *The Quest for Nationality: An American Literary Campaign*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics, and Statistics Administration, Bureau of the Census. 1993. *Statistical Abstract of the United States 1993: The National Data Book*, 113th ed.
- Whisnant, David E. 1983. *All That Is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- See also* Appalachia; Ethnic Folklore; Irish Americans; Scottish Americans; Welsh Americans

Animals

Fauna of North America and their related lore. At every level of American culture, from the casual joke or Saturday morning cartoon to the serious novel or scientific monograph, animals—especially wild animals—have always exerted a special imaginative appeal. Scholarly work by American folklorists demonstrates that, throughout our history, symbolic uses of distinctively American wild animals have expressed national attitudes about such crucial matters as politics, race, gender, sex, and danger.

The folkloristic sources of the ideas, images, and stories about wild animals are many, but we may distinguish seven types: conversational genres, oral narratives, children's literature, popular culture, performances, elite culture, and scientific writing.

First are the shorter conversational genres most central to our commonsense knowledge of the world. These are the jokes, proverbs, riddles, superstitions, and so on that constitute much of the everyday discourse by Americans about wild animals. Embedded in and expressed by these genres are "folk ideas," the basic units of belief about objects in the world. For example, jokes about armadillos often involve people unwittingly eating them; the underlying idea is that armadillos are not edible. Likewise, jokes about alligators often involve people being eaten by them; the underlying idea is that alligators are dangerous. Proverbial expressions, including the humorous versions such as "It's hard to soar with eagles when you work with turkeys" or "...up to your ass in alligators," similarly encode metaphorical connections between folk ideas about animals and human social situations.

Also a folk genre is oral narrative, the second source of ideas about wild animals in America. This genre includes the true "stories" people pass on to explain to one another the meaning of a wild animal. It is also the category that has been treated to the most folklore scholarship. Myths are the longest genres of this sort, and there are many Native American myths involving such animals as the coyote, armadillo, or bear. For some animals, there exist folktales from Native American, African American, and European traditions. We also find "encounter stories" (relating the narrator's encounter with a wild animal) among amateurs and professionals alike. A park ranger is as likely to have a repertoire of stories as is a tourist-attraction announcer or a hunter holding forth in a local tavern.

The third source of ideas about wild animals is children's literature, the printed stories and accompanying illustrations that provide a repertoire of ideas and images for making sense of all sorts of animals. Some children's literature is little more than a printed version of the traditional oral narratives, and some is original. Authors of children's books seem especially disposed to use animal characters in lieu of human ones. Like the folk genres, this written, visual source of ideas is powerful because its influence begins so early in the creation of the child's map of the everyday world. It is powerful, too, because of its visual component, the illustrations accompanying the children's stories. All the more powerful is the transformation of animal illustrations into three-dimensional toys, such as the Teddy Bear or Winnie-the-Pooh. Thus, a persistent problem for the rangers at Yosemite and Yellowstone National Parks is that Americans tend to approach real bears as if they were the storybook kind. Rangers refer to this phenomenon as "the Bambi complex"—which suggests the fourth main source of ideas about wild animals.

Popular culture (also known as mass-mediated culture or commercial culture) is an increasingly important locus of such ideas and images. Included in this category are postcards, souvenirs, cartoons, comics, television commercials, print advertising, theatrical films, and mass-circulation magazines. Popular culture provides a repertoire of stories and images accessible to a wide audience, crossing gender, ethnic, and social-class divisions. Popular materials from commercial culture can be found in abundance from the Warner Brothers cartoon character Wile E. Coyote to advertisements for Wild Turkey bourbon to a theatrical film like *Alligator* (1980).

The fifth source of ideas, images, and stories is the performances that involve somehow an interpretation of a wild animal. These are the participatory drama-like events that include tourist attractions, festivals, museum and zoo programs, hunting expeditions, cooking and foodway events, and the like. Oldest in this category are the Native American performance rituals and dances that involve the armadillo, the coyote, the bear, and the rattlesnake. The snake handling in certain religious communities is a related phenomenon.

The sixth source of our notions about animals is elite culture, the body of literature and fine arts that is the usual subject matter of humanistic study. Fine painting, poetry, novels, and short stories in America often feature wild animals as central symbols in the imaginative landscape of their fictive worlds. But even here folk ideas are often present, though recast in more elegant language. Herman Melville's white whale and William Faulkner's bear are only the best known cases. Poets Gary Snyder and Simon Ortiz find the coyote an especially attractive figure, and novelist Thomas Pynchon uses the alligators-in-the-sewers legend for his own artistic purposes in his novel *V*. In American elite art, we can trace the iconography of American wildlife from the earliest European renditions through the likes of John James Audubon and John Singer Sargent up to the present.

It will surprise some to learn that scientific discourse is the seventh source of American ideas about wild animals. So accustomed are we to think of scientific writing as "fact," opposed to folk and popular "fiction," that we fail to appreciate how cultural is the history of American scientific writing about wild animals. Some scientific writing is the source of, or at least perpetuates, the oldest folk ideas about animals, and, even when a scientific treatise takes space in its historical account to "debunk" the "myths and fallacies" about the animal, the author is acknowledging tacitly that the starting point for American understanding of the beast is a repertoire of folk and popular beliefs concerning it.

Angus Kress Gillespie

References

- Bateson, Gregory. 1979. *Mind and Nature: A Necessary Unity*. New York: Dutton.
- Douglass, Mary. 1982. *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*. New York: Pantheon.
- Gillespie, Angus Kress, and Jay Mechling, eds. 1987. *American Wildlife in Symbol and Story*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Wilson, David Scofield. 1978. *In the Presence of Nature*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.

See also Catfish; Coyote; Fable; Fishing (Commercial); Fishing (Sport); Groundhog Day; Hunting; Jackalope; Opossum; Trapping

Anniversaries

Annual rites of passage celebrated privately or publicly according to cultural preferences. Anniversaries represent cyclical time measurement; the most common anniversaries are wedding and birthday celebrations and commemorations of important historic dates, especially centennials of significant events.

Wedding anniversaries are traditionally recognized with gifts of flowers and special items. Popular beliefs endorse specific gifts to bring good luck according to how many years the couple has been married. Materials such as metals and minerals symbolize the couple's marriage commitment in terms of years. Following German tradition, these anniversaries are frequently referred to by the gift given, such as "silver anniversary."

The commonly accepted anniversary gifts for significant anniversaries are these: one year, paper; five years, wood; ten years, tin; fifteen years, crystal; twenty years, china; twenty-five years, silver; thirty years, pearl or ivory; thirty-five years, coral; forty years, ruby; forty-five years, sapphire; fifty years, gold; fifty-five years, emerald; sixty and seventy-five years, diamond.

The most prominent anniversaries celebrated include the silver, golden, and diamond weddings. Less significant anniversaries also have prescribed gifts, although these are infrequently observed. They include, two years, cotton; three years, leather or muslin; four years, silk; six years, iron; seven years, copper or wool; eight years, electrical appliances; and nine years, pottery.

Anniversary gifts may be practical, luxurious, and even silly variations of the prescribed anniversary motifs. Any items composed of the material for the designated anniversary, such as clothing, tools, toys, or other household goods, are given. Most couples celebrate anniversaries of their nuptials privately, but anniversaries of royal and celebrity couples often receive great publicity and ceremony with political overtones.

Additional anniversary traditions include burning a tall, white memory candle that smells like lily of the valley, a traditional wedding flower. Presented at the wedding reception, a candle burned only annually may last through the golden anniversary. Some women display or wear their wedding gowns at anniversary parties, and the original wedding party and guests may be invited to attend, along with the official who performed the ceremony. Portions of the wedding cake are often saved to eat at anniversary parties (and at christenings) to symbolize that the marriage has lasted and matured.

Birthday anniversaries are celebrated annually for children with parties, presents, and games. Traditions such as spanking once for each year and an extra pat to grow on as well as pinch day, kiss day, and the like are observed. Elaborate birthday celebrations are staged for significant stages of maturity, such as turning twenty-one, reaching full adulthood, or forty years of age, marking the beginning of middle age.

Anniversaries of historic events, usually commemorating military battles, tend to generate patriotic traditions, including the placement of flags in significant locations, such as on graves for Decoration Day. These anniversaries are also occasions for the preservation of historic sites, the commercialization of the event with commemorative

items, or the reiteration of folklore glorifying national heroes like George Washington or Abraham Lincoln.

Anniversaries of death dates are sometimes mentioned in commemorative newspaper ads, and they enter modern folk culture with the common tales of “The Vanishing Hitchhiker,” often a young woman picked up near a cemetery, who is attempting to return home on the anniversary of her death.

Elizabeth D.Schafer

References

- Baker, Margaret. 1977. *Wedding Customs and Folklore*. Vancouver: David and Charles.
- Johnston, William M. 1991. *Celebrations: The Cult of Anniversaries in Europe and the United States Today*. New Brunswick, NJ, and London: Transaction Publishers.
- See also Birthdays*

Anthropological Approach

Folklore as anthropologists have studied it—as part of culture. In the 19th century, when folklore was established as a subject worthy of investigation, the orientation of American scholars to its study was greatly influenced by the presence of the American Indian. The collection of American Indian mythology was deemed a proper enterprise for those interested in folklore. On the Continent, the study of folklore was defined as the study of the peasant populations of Europe, while the study of American Indians or other non-European peoples, who were classified as savages or primitives, was considered to be the domain of the ethnologists. The differing orientation was critical for the development of American folklore scholarship since it designated the study of native peoples as a suitable subject for folklore as well as for anthropology.

American anthropologists, in carving out their discipline, developed a more restricted definition of folklore than did scholars in literature, but a more inclusive view of the folk. Folklore was given a specific place within anthropology, that of oral literature. Anthropologists, who traditionally worked in cultures without writing, could not designate folklore as that which was oral, since that would include all aspects of culture. As Erminie Voegelin elaborated the point, orally transmitted prose and verse forms were “myths and tales, jests and anecdotes, dramas and dramatic dialogues, prayers and formulas, speeches, puns, riddles, proverbs, and song and chant texts” (Voegelin, 1949–1950:403). William R. Bascom simply designated the same area as “verbal art” (Bascom 1955). The folk could be Euro-American, African American, or Native American, though the anthropological folklorist usually studied the latter to the exclusion of the two former groups. Significantly, the anthropological folklorists, merely by their choice of the group to be studied, had succeeded in broadening the concept of “folk” to include a non-European component.

The anthropological folklorists studied folklore as a part of culture—a way of learning more about the culture history, as with Franz Boas, or a way of learning more about the patterns of culture, as with Ruth Benedict. For the anthropological folklorists, the questions were not directed to folklore per se, but rather to culture: What is the nature of culture? and How is this reflected in the folklore?

Deemed crucial for the anthropological folklorists was the collection of detailed narrative texts. The goal was twofold: first, to make an accurate record of the language; and, second, to study the culture as it was reflected in the narratives. Boas’ work on Northwest Coast Indian cultures is an example. In *Chinook Texts* (1894), *Tsimshian Mythology* (1916), *Kutenai Tales* (1917), and *Kwakiutl Culture as Reflected in Mythology* (1935), Boas recorded the narratives phonetically in the native language, and translated them interlineally. The texts were, as Gladys Reichard remarked, “Boas’ self-built monument.”

The anthropological folklorists were likely to compile their material by focusing either on a single culture or on several cultures. They might also study a single aspect of folklore as it was manifested in several cultures. Elsie Clews Parsons’ *Pueblo Religion*

(1939) and Benedict's "The Concept of the Guardian Spirit in North America" (1923) exemplify this comparative approach. On occasion, the anthropological folklorist focused on a genre of folklore. For example, Paul Radin wrote *The Trickster: A Study in American Indian Mythology* (1955), and Benedict produced two volumes on *Zuñi Mythology* (1935). However, Radin's and Benedict's works were not intended as investigations of folklore genres—a concept that was not used by the anthropological folklorists—but rather as explorations in cultural patterning.

The emphasis on cultural patterns was critical for the shift that took place in American anthropology, a shift from an earlier focus on detailed description to a focus on theme and meaning. Thus, folklore manifested certain themes that resonated in other areas of culture as well. In Benedict's terms, it was part of the personality of the culture. Benedict, Radin, and Melville Jacobs were the innovators in this approach to folklore. Their contributions had an impact that continues to reverberate in folklore theory. The three were characterized by Robert H. Lowie as scholars of folklore who were "not averse to psychoanalytic interpretation" (Lowie 1960:467). Together they sparked the psychological interpretation of folklore. This innovation in folklore studies combined three approaches: the psychological, the cultural, and the folkloristic.

Rosemary Lévy Zumwalt

References

- Bascom, William R. 1955. Verbal Art. *Journal of American Folklore* 68:245–252.
- Dundes, Alan. 1966. The American Concept of Folklore. *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 3:226–249.
- Lowie, Robert H. 1960. Contemporary Trends in American Cultural Anthropology. In *Selected Papers in Anthropology*, ed. Cora du Bois. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 461–471.
- Reichard, Gladys. 1943. Franz Boas and Folklore. In *Franz Boas, 1858–1942*, ed. A.L. Kroeber. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association, No. 61. Menasha, WI: American Anthropological Association, pp. 52–57.
- Voegelin, Erminie. 1949–1950. Folklore. In *Funk and Wagnalls Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend*, ed. Maria Leach. New York: Funk and Wagnalk
- Zumwalt, Rosemary Lévy. 1988. *American Folklore Scholarship: A Dialogue of Dissent*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- See also* American Folklore Scholarship: The Early Years; Contextual Approach; Functionalism; Psychology and Folklore; Sociological Approach

Anti-Legend

A term proposed in 1930 by Andre Jolles in his book *Einfache Formen* and brought into use in American folklore scholarship by Linda Dégh. In her examination of the processes of legend formation, Dégh utilized the metaphor of a conduit. Within a network of legend tellers, what she called the “legend conduit” circulates numerous oral versions of a given legend. Having determined that narrators will hold an array of attitudes ranging from acceptance through skepticism to outright opposition, she argues that those at the negative end of the spectrum are likely to transform the story into an anti-legend; that is, they will attempt to undermine the credibility of the story in order to impugn its veracity and to mock those who might be inclined to find the story worthy of retelling as true. Tactics used include rationalizations, alternative explanations, and the citation of supposed higher authorities. A committed narrator’s judgment might even be questioned, and his or her belief might be mocked as silly superstition.

Since humor is one of the most effective means of challenging a fervent belief, some legend narratives are transformed into jokes or comical narratives. Often these stories, resembling catch tales or shaggy-dog stories, will turn on a surprise ending that catches the listener off guard. Having lured listeners into the story by the presentation of a series of plausible situations or credible details, in the end the “punch line,” frequently a pun or a parody of a well-known saying, reveals that the whole narrative was fallacious and the listener an unsuspecting dupe. For example, a story of an encounter with a ghostly revenant that pursues the narrator as he or she attempts an escape might conclude at the seemingly most harrowing moment with the eerie creature grabbing its victim only to say: “Tag you’re it.” Or a mysterious voice crying out in mournful tones: “One black eye” might be stopped with the smart-aleck retort: “You better shut up or you’ll have *two* black eyes.” The warnings offered by such tales are manifold; listeners are not only informed that the veracity of a particular belief (ghostly or spirit apparitions) is suspect, but they are further encouraged to dismiss legends altogether as foolish tales. The anti-legend, then, challenges both legend content and the social significance of the narrative genre as well. The efficacy of such attempts to overturn entrenched beliefs is questionable. The public appetite for tales of mysterious apparitions, strange voices in the night, and other baffling events continues to be insatiable. Indeed, many of these tales are essentially anti-legends minus the comical ending. Within the flow of the legend conduit, an anti-legend can readily be transformed into a belief tale.

John Michael Vlach

References

Dégh, Linda, and Andrew Vazsonyi. 1971. Legend and Belief. *Genre* 4:281–304.

Vlach, John Michael. 1971. One Black Eye and Other Horrors: The Case for the Humorous Anti-Legend. *Indiana Folklore* 4:95–140.

See also Ghost Stories

Appalachia

Physiographic region embracing West Virginia and parts of eighteen other Eastern and Southern states. Appalachia, in cultural history, includes three hundred counties covering most of West Virginia and the Blue Ridge and parts of Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Maryland, North and South Carolina, and Virginia. The region is also called the Southern Highlands, the Upland South, and (in colonial history), the Back-country. Richard M. Dorson called Appalachia “folklore’s natural habitat.” “Of all of the distinctive regions in the United States,” he wrote, “the one most customarily linked with folklore is the southern Appalachians.” The idea that Appalachia is a reservoir of American folk culture originated with the local-color movement of travel and fiction writers of the late 19th century and persisted through the development of folklife studies as a professional enterprise. By the close of the 20th century, the centrality of Appalachia in the definition and study of folklife had receded, but folklife forms still provide icons that set apart the region from other parts of the United States. Lacking conventional political boundaries and regionwide economic or social institutions of the sort that help define regions such as New England or the West, Midwest, or South, Appalachia is nearly always represented in popular culture by some sort of reference to folklife, usually folk music or crafts.

Nineteenth-century writers created an inventory of cultural expression and deviant behaviors that signified Appalachian “otherness” to metropolitan audiences; these included speech and dialect, log architecture, folk music and dance, handicrafts, woodcraft, superstitions and religious practices, moonshining, illiteracy, and a reliance on “folk justice,” most dramatically in a series of “mountain feuds” given sensational coverage by the metropolitan press. Four influential books of the early 20th century both critiqued and codified this repertory and marked out paths that later generations of professional folklorists would follow in the region. Emma Bell Miles’ *The Spirit of the Mountains* (1905) offered a sympathetic and contextual portrait of mountain people, with emphasis on the expressive culture of religious, social, and domestic life and on the role of women as “repositories of tribal lore—tradition and song, medical and religious learning.” Horace Kephart’s *Our Southern Highlanders* (1913) elaborated upon Miles’ portrayal of men as the bearers of outdoor traditions associated with farming, hunting, and woodcraft and attempted to balance the sensationalism that journalists had attached to the subjects of moonshining and the so-called mountain feuds. John C. Campbell’s *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland* (1921) offered a magisterial survey of Appalachian geography, history, and culture, into which was incorporated the folksong researches of his wife (and posthumous editor) Olive Dame Campbell. *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians* (1917) was the product of collaboration between Olive Dame Campbell and Cecil Sharp, an English folklorist who made three extensive collecting expeditions (1916–1918) and gathered 1,600 folk songs in North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

Meanwhile, academic interest in ballad texts made the second and third decades of the 20th century a “golden age” of folksong collecting in the mountains, with such active collectors as C. Alphonse Smith and Arthur Kyle Davis, Jr. in Virginia, Frank C. Brown in North Carolina, E. C. Perrow, Josiah H. Combs, and Hubert G. Sherin in Kentucky, and John Harrington Cox in West Virginia. Cox’s *Folk Songs of the South* (1925) established a model for the academic publication of folksongs, which was reinforced by the expanded publication of Sharp’s collection in two volumes in 1932. State folklore societies established in Kentucky and North Carolina in 1912, Virginia in 1913, and West Virginia in 1915 grew out of the collectors’ focus on folksongs, as did the establishment of the first folk festivals in the region, at Asheville, North Carolina, in 1928 and White Top Mountain, Virginia, in 1931. The development of recording equipment made it possible to focus upon tunes as well as texts, and anxiety that radio and the burgeoning recording industry would somehow dilute the purity of “authentic” folk expression lent urgency to this project. Robert Winslow Gordon began his ambitious scheme to create a national collection of recorded folksongs with an expedition to western North Carolina in 1925. His subsequent success in establishing the Archive of American Folk Song in the Library of Congress allowed him to claim in 1930 that “The Government recognizes the hill-billy and the American Negro as the basis of American folk-song and music.” Gordon’s successors at the Library of Congress and other federal agencies during the 1930s expanded the scope of collecting in the region, adding topical songs to the canon, along with mining and other occupational folksongs and folklore. Two additional influential works that appeared in the 1930s were George Pullen Jackson’s *White Spirituals of the Southern Uplands* (1933) and Allen Eaton’s *Handicrafts of the Southern Highlands* (1937). Eaton’s work led to the creation of the Southern Highlands Handicraft Guild and an official outlet for mountain crafts along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Asheville.

In addition to codifying genres and contexts for folklife study in Appalachia, Miles, Kephart, and the Campbells also amplified two other tendencies that shaped the perception of Appalachia as a cultural region. One was the habit of generalizing about the entire southern Appalachian region, regardless of the geographic limits of a given investigator’s research. Kephart, for example, spent almost all of his time in the mountains in or near Swain County, North Carolina, but he did not hesitate to echo Miles’ claim that “throughout the highlands...our nature is one, our hopes, our loves, our daily life the same.... “The mountaineers are homogenous so far as speech and manners and experiences and ideals can make them” (Kephart 1913) he wrote, an assertion that belied careful distinctions drawn elsewhere in his and Miles’ work between prosperous “valley people,” “the average hillman,” and impoverished “branch-water people.” This tendency reinforced the presumption that, no matter how carefully a researcher’s conclusions were qualified or how sharply the research might be focused upon a particular genre or on the folklife of a particular locality or even of a particular family, they would be interpreted as documentation of a regional folk culture. Thus, Leonard Roberts wrote in introducing his *Sang Branch Settlers: Folksongs and Tales of a Kentucky Mountain Family* (1974) that “the fundamental conclusion is that, although a geopolitical history of Appalachia has not yet been written, perhaps never can be or need not be written, the



The Faust family at work in front of their house. Anderson County, Tennessee, 1910. Library of Congress.

region's oral literature and folkways reveal it to be a rich repository of British and European culture."

John C. Campbell's more systematic approach to regional analysis led him to emphasize the importance of "constant qualification" in generalizing about the mountains, but he (and particularly Olive Dame Campbell) contributed to a second tendency—an instrumental view of folklife, valuing it in relation to its usefulness in advancing other projects, such as the "folk school" established in Brasstown, North Carolina, by Campbell in her husband's memory in 1925 as the centerpiece in a program of rural uplift. Earlier, at Berea College in Kentucky and in numerous settlement schools established in the region between 1895 and 1925, educators and missionaries had created "fireside industries" and instructional programs in handicrafts and folk music and dance as an adjunct of moral instruction and vocational education. During the 1930s, conservatives promoted folk festivals as engines of economic development and the preservation of "Anglo-Saxon" culture, while liberals and radicals incorporated folk music into the tool kit of labor organizers and expanded collecting under the auspices of the employment programs of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Federal agencies such as the Tennessee Valley Authority, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway used folk artifacts such as log buildings and hand tools to

create quaintly flattering frames to showcase their modernizing activities, while systematically driving mountain people from their homes and destroying artifacts (such as frame buildings of Cades Cove or the gasoline-powered generating equipment of Mabry's Mill) that conflicted with the image of Appalachia as a folk culture.

After World War II, Appalachian folk music was adapted to the needs of the urban folk-music revival of the 1940s and 1950s and the construction of alternative lifestyles for disenchanting young people during the 1960s. In the 1970s, folk music became a favorite tactic of community organizers, while Eliot Wigginton's Foxfire program of Rabun Gap, Georgia, reintroduced folklife study and publication as a pedagogical tool in remote mountain settings. Inspired in part by the commercial success of the Foxfire publications, folk festivals expanded to embrace crafts and storytelling as well as a variety of traditional and commercial musical genres and became a standard component in tourism promotion in most of the Appalachian states.

This instrumentalism—and the consumerism that has often grown out of it—presented a challenge to professional folklorists who believed, with Thelma James, that “the truest values of folklore are entertainment for the participants or...materials for cultural studies by the scholar.” Students of Appalachian folklife during the postwar era, and particularly since the 1960s, have responded to this challenge in two ways. Some have rejected the policing of boundaries between folk and popular culture by exploring and documenting the interpenetration of folk and popular genres, as in the work of Archie Green on coal-mining songs and D.K. Wilgus, Bill C. Malone, Neil V. Rosenberg, and Robert Cantwell on the folk roots of commercial country music. Another response has been to expand beyond research on music, crafts, and tales in favor of genres that do not lend themselves to “commoditization.” Examples are Jeff Todd Titon's (1988) and Thomas Burton's (1993) studies of religious music, preaching, and worship as folk performance, Michael Ann Williams' (1991) reconstruction of vernacular housing as the patterning of interior and exterior space rather than as a set of architectural artifacts and building techniques, Lynwood Montell's study of “folk justice” and interpersonal violence, and the growing number of studies that explore the African American roots of Appalachian cultural forms. The work of Williams, Montell, and Patrick Mullen are examples also of the increasing influence of oral history in folklife scholarship and of a renewed interest in topics, such as the gender and age-related dimensions of folk culture, that were first raised by Emma Bell Miles in the early 20th century. At the same time, folklife research is of increasing interest to scholars in other disciplines. A notable example is historian David Hackett Fischer's *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (1989), which defines Appalachia as one of four colonial hearths of American culture and defines its culture, both in its transplantation from Great Britain and Ireland and in its evolution in the United States, almost exclusively in terms of folkways such as speech, dress, gender relations, marriage customs, and child-rearing practices, foodways, naming practices, domestic architecture, religion, superstitions, plus the familiar triad of illiteracy, moonshining, and feuds. This ambitious work also exemplifies another trend: that of defining the core of Appalachia in a broader cultural region that extends across the entire Upland South to the Ozarks, north Texas, and the Anglo-American component of the desert Southwest. While such a view is controversial, it is likely to ensure that the pivotal role that folklife has played in studies of Appalachia as an American region will continue for many decades to come.

John Alexander Williams

References

- Burton, Thomas. 1993. *Serpent-Handling Believers*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Campbell, John C. 1921. *The Southern Highlander and His Homeland*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Campbell, Olive Dame, and Cecil Sharp. 1917. *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians*. New York: Putnam.
- Jones, Michael Owen. 1989. *Craftsman of the Cumberlands: Tradition and Creativity*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Kephart, Horace. 1913. rev. ed. 1922. *Our Southern Highlanders*. New York: Macmillan.
- Malone, Bill C. 1993. *Singing Cowboys and Musical Mountaineers: Southern Culture and the Roots of Country Music*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- McNeil, W.K., ed. 1989. *Appalachian Images in Folk and Popular Culture*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- Sharp, Cecil. 1932. *English Folk-Songs from the Southern Appalachians*. 2 vols. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Titon, Jeff Todd. 1988. *Powerhouse for God: Speech, Song, and Chant in an Appalachian Baptist Church*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Whisnant, David E. 1983. *All That Is Native and Fine: The Politics of Culture in an American Region*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Williams, Michael Ann. 1991. *Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Folk Dwelling in Southwestern North Carolina*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.

Applied Folklore

An approach that advocates the use of folklore materials to foster social, economic, and political change. The targeted constituency includes communities, work environments, and institutions such as schools, churches, and hospitals. Applied folklore used the paradigms of applied anthropology as a model, and each grew out of the social and political milieu of the mid- to late 1960s.

During the later 1960s and early 1970s, a group of folklorists formed an Applied Folklore Section within the American Folklore Society, to share concepts in the formation of theories, techniques, and methodologies. As with applied anthropology, members of the Applied Folklore Section labored hard toward an acceptable definition that would adequately represent the paradigms within which those involved would operate. In 1971 a Middle Atlantic Conference on Folk Culture was held in Pittsburgh, the main theme of which was applied folklore. The following definition was used at this conference: "...the utilization of the theoretical concepts, factual knowledge, and research methodologies of Folklorists in activities or programs meant to ameliorate contemporary social, economic, and technical problems." This definition called directly for change and implicitly placed the folklorist as a necessary catalyst in fostering that change.

Clearly, inherent within the first definition of applied folklore are problems of one's personal orientation and bias. For instance, *who* would identify these "contemporary social, economic, and technical problems?" In addition, the rhetoric did not define the role of the communities, institutions, or structures involved as an equal agent in the process of decision making and implementation.

During the 1971 Conference on Folk Culture, Richard Bauman presented his proposal for the establishment of a Center for Applied Folklore. Although pursued for a short period by a handful of devoted folklorists, such a center has



After finishing fieldwork in Chicago, Elizabeth Mathias (right) leads a folklife workshop for members of the Italian community there. Chicago, 1977. Photo Carl Fleischhauer. American Folklife Center.

never materialized. There were, of course, those who stood in strong opposition to the very idea of applying folklore outside of the academic arena. Among those who stood in opposition was the late Richard M. Dorson, who believed strongly that the role of the folklorist was within the academic arena. Dorson advocated that research, publication, and teaching were the mainstays of the folklorist, and he further contended that scholarship suffered when extra activities outside of the academic environment pulled scholars away from their accepted duties. Dorson's views on applied folklore (and later, public-sector folklore), softened after he directed a research project among mill workers in Gary, Indiana, in the 1960s.

Just as there were definite possibilities for "cultural dynamite" inherent within the definition of applied folklore, so were there also inherent problems within Dorson's (and others') objections. Implicit within the thinking of those who opposed applied folklore was the belief that scholarship was for a chosen few and that the larger audiences comprised of the "general public" had no direct role in the applications of scholarship. Those who favored applied folklore did not stand in opposition to solid scholarship; they wished to place the results of their education and research into some practical use to foster positive action and change while testing the validity and soundness of theories from folkloristics.

During the next few years, the strivings of those persons involved in applied folklore were diffused through dichotomies that arose between the two camps of thought, and the very definition of applied folklore was softened. A new rhetoric arose that relegated the role of applied folklore to an exercise that took the folklorist from the activities of research, publication, and teaching into "activities" outside the academic arena. These "activities" were broadly defined, and absent was the stronger rhetoric pertaining to the active pursuit of social, economic, or political change.

Historically, there were earlier movements that embodied the strivings of the applied folklorist of the late 1960s to 1970s. When folk schools were first formed in the early 20th century, for example, their founders directly stated the desire to improve social, economic, and political conditions for their community members and constituents. The Highlander Folk School of Tennessee served as a training ground for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Sister Rosa Parks in their activities involving peaceful protest and civil disobedience. In the 1930s, the John C. Campbell Folk School of Brasstown, North Carolina, instituted woodcarving and cooperative farming activities (with training in new farming technologies) in a desire to empower the members of the community while increasing their economic status. Placed in the context of the original definition for applied folklore, these folk schools wished to institute a change in the lives of their constituents that would "ameliorate economic and technological problems."

Into the 1990s, the things that the applied folklorists strove toward have been reached to some degree within public-sector folklore. Early in the movement of applied folklore, one of its defining characteristics was a desire to expand folklorists' roles and responsibilities into venues outside of the academic arena. With the establishment of state, regional, and local folk-arts programs, the folk-arts program at the National Endowment for the Arts, the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, and the Festival of American Folklife as presented by the Smithsonian Institution, many folklorists are employed outside of university and college contexts. Most of these would define themselves as public-sector folklorists. In addition, there has been a related movement termed "cultural conservation," which advocates much collaborative research, publication, and programming activities among persons employed within a diversity of public and private institutions. One may ask, however, if the persons who embody these positions strive to institute social change or solve perceived social inadequacies, in the original meanings of the applied-folklore movement. In addition, the same question must be asked about public-sector folklore as is posed above regarding the definition of applied folklore: Do the people or communities involved in the activities of the public-sector folklorist necessarily want or desire the increased visibility, empowerment, and attention that comes to them as the result of these public programs? Further, upon whose terms are these public programs and their related activities envisioned and implemented? The ethical and theoretical problems inherent within public-sector work (as an extension of applied folklore) are numerous.

Despite the visibility and attention given to public-sector folklore and cultural conservation, applied folklore in its original meanings and definitions continues to be carried forth. David Hufford, for example, actively utilizes folklore theory and techniques in his work within medicine and hospitals, with an objective toward implementing changes in certain structures and systems. The Highlander Folk School continues as a center for the study of environmental pollution, with very active protest activities

implemented to institute change. In 1985 folklorist Leslie Prosterman edited a special issue, entitled “Practicing Folklore,” for the journal *Practicing Anthropology*, a publication of the Society of Applied Anthropology. The issue was devoted to then current activities in applied folklore, illustrating its continued vitality. Thus, some of the goals that fueled the original proponents of applied folklore continue to motivate folklorists, sometimes couched in the current activities within the public sector and cultural conservation.

David A. Brose

See also Cultural Conservation; Ethics in Folklore Research; Folk Schools; New Deal and Folk Culture; Public Folklore

April Fools’ Day

The first day of April, an unofficial holiday observed in northern Europe and North America with pranks, innocent fibbing, and practical jokes. It is also known as All Fools’ Day and, in Scotland, as Huntigowk Day, from the custom of sending the gullible on “gowk-hunting” missions—the gowk, or cuckoo, being an emblem of simpletons (for other European antecedents, see Dundes 1989). In America, too, fools’ errands are traditional, with the unwary being sent for sky hooks or pigeon’s milk. Children delight in mildly aggressive mischief (salting the sugar bowl, placing “Kick me” signs on friends’ backs) and in various forms of creative deception, from gluing coins to the sidewalk to “Made you look” lies (“There’s a spider on your shoulder!”). Also perennial are telephone gags. A friend might be told, “Call this number and ask for Mr. Lion,” only to discover that he has reached the local zoo.

Adults, too, engage in subversive raillery. Hennig Cohen and Tristram Potter Coffin (1987) recount office pranks in which a fellow worker is told his girl friend is pregnant, and a scofflaw is “arrested” for parking violations. The day is a special boon for hoaxing journalists. The British media have run stories on Italy’s “spaghetti harvest” and on a marathon runner who, misreading the rules, intends to run nonstop for twenty-six days. College newspapers announce the firing of the faculty. The April 1, 1985, issue of *Esquire* magazine carried George Plimpton’s biography of ballplayer Sidd Finch, a Zen enthusiast with a 168-mile-per-hour fastball.

The day’s association with bootless errands has suggested many historical prototypes, including the flight of Noah’s dove, Jesus’ shuttling between judges at his trial, and Ceres’ search for the echo of Proserpine’s crying. The holiday has also been linked to the medieval Feast of Fools, the Hindu festival of Holi, and the unstable, “fooling” weather of early spring. The most probable origin, though, is calendrical. In 1582 France’s Julian calendar gave way officially to the Gregorian, shifting New Year’s Day from March 25 to January 1. But the official policy was slow to drive out habit. For years the conservative and the forgetful continued the custom of exchanging calls and gifts on April 1, the octave of the traditional New Year’s Day. Their error made them Europe’s first “April fools,” or *poissons d’avril* (from the belief that “April fish” are easily deceived).

Functionally, the mild mayhem of April Fools' Day is a vernacular form of "symbolic inversion" quite appropriate to the season of the vernal equinox. The day has been called a "calendrical rite of passage" that allows for a temporary "reversal of power" (Dundes 1989). Like other inversive holidays such as Halloween, it operates under an unwritten protocol that periodically tolerates the impermissible. Hence the impunity of the April 1 jokester. When he signals a joke with the formula "April Fool!" the recipient must respond nonaggressively. Folk wisdom claims that a loss of temper may ensure the victim "real" bad luck. That April fooling is a means for managing disorder is also evident in the custom, now defunct, of sending anonymous love letters, "all in fun," to those whom one was afraid to approach directly (Harder 1961).

Finally, computer users have their own April Fool practical jokes designed for them, such as the shareware program that alarms the user by announcing the presence of water in the hard drive, then turns your computer into a spin drier. Bogus announcements of April Fools' Day computer viruses have also occurred.

Tad Tuleja

References

- Babcock, Barbara, ed. 1978. *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Challfont, Fran E. 1987. April Fool Jokes: A Look into the Heritage of WHIMSY. In *WHIMSY V: World Humor and Irony Membership Yearbook*, ed. Don L.Nilsen and Aileen Pace Nilsen. Tempe: Arizona State University Press, pp. 8–11.
- Cohen, Hennig, and Tristram Potter Coffin, eds. 1987. *The Folklore of American Holidays*. Detroit: Gale.
- Dundes, Alan. 1989. April Fool and April Fish: Towards a Theory of Ritual Pranks. In *Folklore Matters*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, pp. 98–111.
- Harder, Kelsie B. 1961. Just an April Fool. *Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin* 27:5–7.
- See also Prank*

Architecture, Vernacular

Artifacts and landscapes built in communities according to time-tested but flexible customs and generally without the services of professional architects; also called “traditional architecture” and “folk architecture.” Like other features of folk tradition, vernacular architecture involves a swirl of inherited ideas and skills in contact with changing fashions and models from sources outside of the community’s shared aesthetic. This kind of building combines sensible habits with variations that meet the community’s expectations and ideals.

The much mythologized rural, small town, and “main street” America continues to be the focus of many studies in vernacular building. Typically, main street was built and rebuilt by generations of pioneers or early builders and then by entrepreneurs and businessmen who worked to establish a secure, prominent position for their community in the economy of the state, region, and nation. Many a town got its start as a small service community for commercial mining or timbering employees, farmers, or river tradesmen. The town may have further evolved with the coming of the railroad, a tourist and recreation enterprise, a new factory, or an interstate highway. The majority of historic buildings in any town or region are vernacular, or traditional, buildings. It is that kind of commonplace built environment that conserves the essence of a town’s special history. At the end of the 20th century, we are beginning to appreciate everyday architecture and to see the messages ordinary buildings convey. Understanding and conserving all kinds of buildings and places will be important if future citizens are to comprehend history accurately and in context.

For the past fifty years, new commercial architecture and reconstructions of downtown buildings have mosdy tried to imitate icons from other regions of the nation (witness the long-running Williamsburg, Virginia-derived “Colonial Revival” style). Projects have eradicated and thus denied the authentic traditions of cultural regions with distinctive folk traditions; when the threads of local personality are severed, the fragile connections of local heritage are lost.

Vernacular buildings usually (but not always) express patterns of ethnic and regional character. Vernacular architecture often has localized and regional patterns based on familiar traditions in design, construction, decoration, and use that have evolved over generations. It often, but rarely exclusively, employs local building materials. Scholars study these patterned resemblances through space and time, charting the tenacity of ideas as well as the dynamics and changes that always occur in cultural heritage. Researchers have sorted the many varieties of vernacular buildings into *types*. This typology, or placing building types into categories based *on form*, demonstrates their genealogies and helps illustrate their formal evolution through time, sometimes through centuries of use and movement. Form (floor plan, layout, height) is important in traditional building because form is relatively stable over time and space, and scholars can use form to devise categories and assist in investigations of cultural diffusion.

Type differs from *style* in architecture. Type is an important element in the study of vernacular architecture. A building's type—floor plan, placement of chimney or stove, roof form, height—is very stable over time. Distinct patterns of vernacular buildings can be charted and mapped through time and space, and we are sometimes able to detect the probable origin for types of buildings we had previously thought to simply be “American.” Matters of construction, use, and decoration of vernacular buildings are also very important and are the subject of scholarly research and interpretation.

Most stores, roads, houses, bridges, barns, warehouses, gas stations, and so on are the result of the dynamics and processes of vernacular design in the place where they were imagined and constructed for the needs of routine life, work, and commerce. When people have choices, they select types and styles in dwellings that reflect a number of forces. Choices may be made to present an impression to the neighborhood, to express well-being and success and participation in the fashion trends of the day.

Among the best-known types of American vernacular houses are British Isles-based types such as the single-cell (or “single pen”) house, varieties of double-pen houses (such as the hall and parlor and the saddlebag subtypes), the I house, the Georgian cottage and house, and the foursquare house of the Midwest, along with the French Creole house, the *Ern-haus*, or “hall-kitchen” house, built by German-speaking immigrants, and the shotgun house. All but the shotgun house are based on postmedieval European spatial traditions; the shotgun house, a long narrow one-story house with its door or front in the gable that faces the street, has its origins in West African communities and in a sequence of evolution that took place in the Caribbean and the Mississippi River Basin around New Orleans. There are a dozen or so major barn types in America, among them the English barn type familiar in the East and the transverse-crib barn type, a widely distributed Midwest and Southern type typical of the 19th century. These house and barn types were erected in all manner of traditional construction materials, from adobe and sod to brick and stone, and in the various forms of horizontal and vertical log and wooden frame construction.



Sharecroppers' house. Asheville, North Carolina, late 1800s or early 1900s. Library of Congress.

In the context of vernacular architecture, style pertains to visual elements of decoration and ornament that buildings exhibit. One can place buildings in a category of style by studying these surface qualities. In vernacular architecture, style has little to do with a building's functions or its use of interior space. Stylistic periods change through time as fashions change in the context of popular design and taste, often as influenced by a small number of designers, artists, or architects whose ideas are widely disseminated in the media. One of the problems with classifications of styles and periods is that the categories are fuzzy and easily abused. For example, "Classical" applies equally to an 18th-century English brick house in the Virginia tidewater, a New England church facade, and a suburban shopping mall storefront in Los Angeles.

Vernacular buildings may also display flashes of the style and ornaments of the age, such as "Georgian," "Greek Revival," "Gothic," "Mission Revival," or "Colonial Revival." These broadly popular styles reflect national changes in taste. Stylistic ornament is characteristically applied as a sort of mask or Sunday clothes, put on the form of an otherwise ultraconservative vernacular house. The special architectural style that dresses up a vernacular building is a vital element in the building's social and cultural context.

Symbols are important. For example, we have inherited a deep-seated concept that Greek- and Roman-looking classical columns lend dignity if not a look of success and power to the front of a 19th-century farmhouse or the entry on a new suburban banking facility. Americans love grand columns and Classical pediments, whether realized in

massive limestone on the county courthouse or made of flat vinyl and nailed as a decorative motif up and around the porch of a ranch-style house.

Students of vernacular architecture concoct long lists of questions to ask about the subject. In addition to the questions inherent in the remarks above, two more may be mentioned: Why do things last after their supposed original function changes or ends? Are they survivals from earlier periods or other places? Take, for example, the large fireplace in the new suburban house. Its original function gone (cooking hearth and heating), the fireplace continues to be built because a hearth has symbolic values for millions of people—and offers the correct place for some American families' ritual hanging of the Christmas stockings.

Studying vernacular architecture gives us entry into broader areas of behavior and cultural expression. People live in environments, whether haphazard ones or planned, and not merely in buildings. We build these environments, and their relationships with other environments are important. Vernacular buildings often reflect an intention to conform to accepted values in the community, resulting from hallowed (and some-



*To store vegetables and canned goods,
the Jarvis family uses this cellar.
Alleghany County, North Carolina,
1978. Photo Lyntha Scott Eiler.
American Folklife Center.*

times moribund) traditions in design rather than from fashionable or futuristic academic architects. Folk builders naturally and often reuse parts of old structures or entire

structures as they expand and tinker with their landscapes and people take advantage of local climate and terrain. To be conservative is not necessarily to be old-fashioned or resistant to change.

Traditional builders acquire competence through apprenticeship and imitation of admired models and artisans rather than through institutionalized classes or schools of design. Design values are imbedded in the community's traditions and worldview. Rather than being called an "architect," the designer of a country store, a gas station, a Philadelphia row house, a railroad-crossing shack, or a coal-mine tippie was likely to be called a builder, a contractor, a craftsman, a bricklayer, a carpenter, a stone mason, or another such term.

One of the features of vernacular design that differentiates it from high-style design is the degree to which the client and other members of the community participate in the architectural process. Forms are often familiar; neighbors understand what is being built and why. The contractor knows similar buildings, and his work is attuned to the needs of the client. This sometimes means there is less room for creativity in the job than in high-style design, but that is expected in the processes of traditional building. People apply decorative details and variations to give the building special character.

Vernacular buildings range from the prehistoric Native American dwellings of natural materials to the vertical-log walled houses of French settlers in the Mississippi Valley and the vast barns of the Pennsylvania farm; from the fine Georgian and Federal I houses of early times to the split-foyer suburban house of the 1970s and 1980s. Vernacular building is well represented in structures that may seem to be high-style but exhibit strong elements of local and ethnic cultural heritage, such as the Victorian town house, the community school building, the mail-order-catalog bungalow, and the county courthouse.

We can help guide changes in our built environments through planning, zoning, efforts in historic preservation, and cultural conservation. We may, in fact, select buildings, artifacts, and memories that we deem important in a community's heritage. The remembered story of how the electric company forced people off the fertile river bottomland to build the hydroelectric project or the flood-control reservoir, or the chair made by the itinerant carpenter, or the log house that once served as a stagecoach stop—these memories and artifacts become heirlooms of value. Thus it is that scholars of traditional building look at architecture, landscape, and landmarks as palpable, tangible manifestations of culture, both high-style and vernacular. For vernacular design, one of the best ways to study culture is by direct examination and analysis of the built environment, because material things are stable and expressive vessels for communication of ideas. We need to look at structures that embody the citizens' sense of place and of history in both conscious ways (statues in the cemetery, public-school design, churches) and unconscious ways (farmstead buildings need to help manage and direct the forces of progress if they are to help leave a usable history to those who layout, vernacular houses' symmetry). People who study follow.

Howard Wight Marshall

References

- Carter, Thomas, and Bernard L.Herman, eds. 1989–1991. *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture*. Vols. 3–4. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.
- Cummings, Abbott Lowell. 1979. *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625–1725*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, Belknap Press.
- Glassie, Henry. 1975. *Folk Housing in Middle Virginia: A Structural Analysis of Historical Artifacts*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Hubka, Thomas. 1984. *Big House, Little House, Back House, Barn*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England.
- Jordan, Terry G., and Matti Kaups. 1989. *The American Backwoods Frontier*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Marshall, Howard Wight. 1981. *Folk Architecture in Little Dixie: A Regional Culture in Missouri*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press.
- Martin, Charles. 1984. *Hollybush: Folk Building and Sodal Change in an Appalachian Community*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Upton, Dell, and John Michael Vlach, eds. 1985. *Common Places: Readings in Vernacular Architecture*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- Williams, Michael Ann. 1991. *Homeplace: The Social Use and Meaning of the Dwelling in Southwestern North Carolina*. Athens: University of Georgia Press.
- See also Art, Folk; Crafts; Cultural Landscape; Folklife Movement; Material Culture; Vernacular

Archive of Folk Culture

The archival arm of the American Folklife Center. The Archive of Folk Culture was founded in 1928 within the Music Division of the Library of Congress. Originally named the Archive of American Folk-Song, it represented an early institutional commitment to documentation and research in the area of the American folksong. Its first head was Robert Winslow Gordon, and during the 1930s it flourished under the direction of John and Alan Lomax, building a large collection of field recordings and manuscripts from all regions of America and becoming a national center for documentation of American folk traditions. Later heads included Benjamin A. Botkin, Duncan Emrich, Rae Korson, Alan Jabbour, and Joseph C. Hickerson. In 1978 the archive became part of the American Folklife Center, and in 1980 it was renamed the Archive of Folk Culture to reflect the makeup of its ethnographic collections.

In 1941 the first of a long-lived series of albums appeared from the archive's collections, presenting documentary recordings of folk music and folklore. The series pioneered in using sound recordings to present folk culture to a broad audience, and commercial companies producing documentary recordings in later decades owe much to the archive's early published series. The archive was also the basis for creation of the library's Recording Laboratory in 1941, and during the same period Alan Lomax experimented with field documentaries and hosted programs on radio.

Collecting concentrated on American folk music in the archive's early years, but Alan Lomax took a step toward making the collections international by visiting the Bahamas in 1935 and Haiti in 1937. His documentary work also led to experiments with artistic

biography in sound, involving verbal interviews as well as musical performances of artists such as Aunt Molly Jackson, Huddie Ledbetter (Lead Belly), Woodrow Wilson “Woody” Guthrie, and Ferdinand “Jelly Roll” Morton. By the later 1930s, the office helped launch the term and concept “oral history.” In the 1940s, under Botkin and more strongly under Emrich, the emphasis on verbal and other traditions grew, and for a period in the 1950s the unit was renamed the Folklore Section. Korson strengthened the archive’s ties to ethnomusicology, and during her tenure the worldwide holdings were strengthened.

Under the aegis of the American Folklife Center, the archive collections have been significantly increased by ethnographic field projects. These collections include every medium of documentation and cover the full subject-matter gamut of folklore and folklife. In 1994 the archive held more than one million items, including 600,000 manuscripts, 200,000 color and black-and-white still photographs, 50,000 sound recordings, 200,000 ephemera, and lesser numbers of moving-image documentation, computer discs, and other media. Roughly three-fourths of the collections are from the United States, including materials from every state. The international and older domestic collections are primarily musical, whereas ethnographic collections from Folklife Center projects are strong in material and verbal culture and in occupational and ethnic traditions from both rural and urban areas. U.S. collections range from American Indian materials to documentation of the most recent immigrant traditions.

Alan Jabbour

References

- Bartis, Peter Thomas. 1982. *A History of the Archive of Folk Song at the Library of Congress: The First Fifty Years*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- Green, Archie. 1985. The Archive’s Shores. *Folklife Annual 1985*. ed. Alan Jabbour and James Hardin. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, pp. 60–73.
- Kodish, Debora G. 1978. A National Project with Many Workers: Robert Winslow Gordon and the Archive of American Folk Song. *Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 35 (October):218–233.
- Lloyd, Timothy. 1992. *The Archive of Folk Culture: The National Collection of American and World Folklore*. Washington, DC: American Folklife Center, Library of Congress, 16 pp. *See also* American Folklife Center

Archives, Folklore

Depositories of collected folklore materials, including tapes, transcripts, photos, films, material-culture items, and so forth. Folklore-archive materials reflect different folklore genres as they are practiced among different peoples and in different geographic areas. Folklore archives have existed in Europe since the 1800s; however, not until 1928 was the Archive of Folk Culture founded in the United States. Housed in the Library of Congress, the Archive of Folk Culture benefited from Works Progress Administration (WPA) projects, in the 1930s and 1940s, and more recently has sponsored folk studies in various areas of the nation. Though technically a national archive, the Archive of Folk Culture does not function as comprehensively as its European counterparts. As a result, a folklore scholar in the United States needs to be familiar with smaller archives throughout the country.

While there are archives affiliated with state folk-arts councils, the majority of folklore archives in the United States are connected to universities. Often starting in boxes that eventually take over the office of a folklore professor, archives need their own space to be effectual. Such archives rapidly expand, composed primarily of materials submitted by students to fulfill class requirements, as well as items collected by professional folklorists. Collecting leads logically to archiving, which in turn fosters research.

Students visiting folklore archives are able to see how their collections are used by other students and scholars. However, archivists generally do not allow students unlimited access to an archive. A folklore archivist secures archive materials so that no precious information is lost. Some archives have material that is restricted, and limitations are often put upon documents folklorists use for personal research. In addition, the informant and the collector may also place restraints on material. Despite such restrictions, a well-organized and extensive archive will contain a wealth of easily procurable material.

Maintaining an archive is a never-ending process. A folklore archive needs to have folklore material readily available in order to be useful for scholarly research by both the student and the folklore professional. Ideally, folklore archives should be used by scholars of varying disciplines, creating camaraderie rather than competition. The magnitude of material submitted to an archive requires organization by diligent archivists to see that items are available and that the archive runs smoothly.

Well-organized submissions and careful use of archive materials are essential in developing a well-run archive. However, no matter how well organized or well supported an archive is, its success hinges, ironically, upon both the flexibility and the consistency of methods employed by the archivists.

The first step in building an archive is to gather a large enough body of material to warrant a collection and from which to be able to draw valid conclusions. Some archives contain private collections of one person's life research. Other archives, such as those in the public sector, contain material collected from the community, while archives at universities and colleges often contain items collected by students.

One of the most critical tasks in establishing and maintaining an archive is that of preservation. The archivist must be aware of the types of paper used, the boxes in which they are stored, the manner of storing recorded tapes, and the temperature and humidity of the archive, among other things. If an archive has hundreds of narratives about the fishing community in a given area, but stores copies on low-quality paper, that collection may be useless within twenty years because the printing may begin to fade or the paper to crumble.

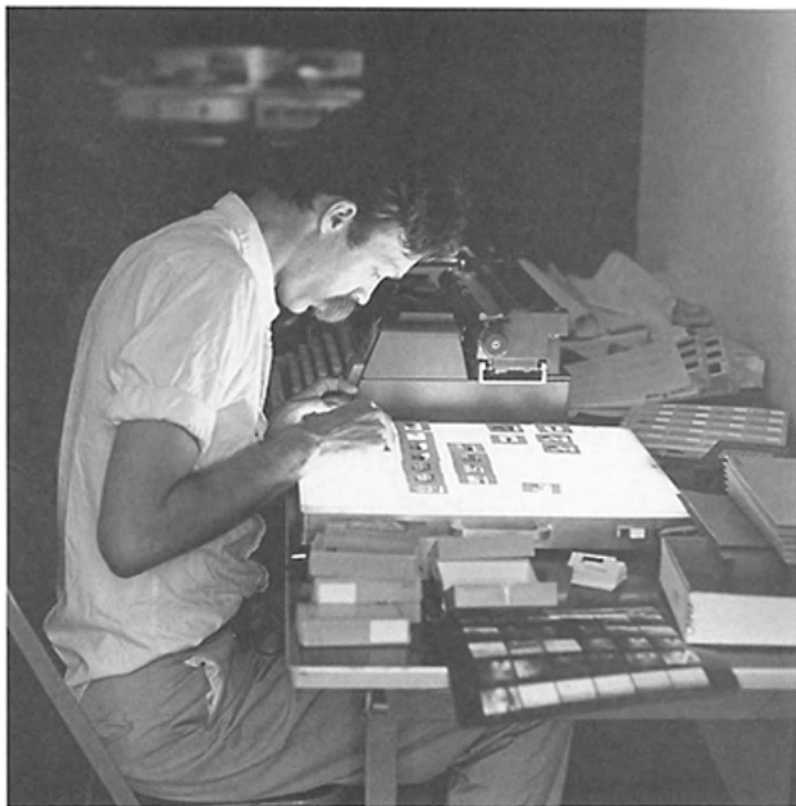
Once the material in the archives is in good condition and ready to be filed, a system must be established so that patrons and employees can easily access this material. The best possible system depends on the nature of the collections and on the needs of the users. One traditional method of narrative classification is represented by the Aarne-Thompson Type Index and the Thompson Motif-Index. Another way to classify material, not limited to narrative, is described in William A. Wilson's 1993 article, "Mormon Folklore: Cut from the Marrow of Everyday Experience." There is no one technique perfect for every archive, and types of indexes vary from one archive to the next.

Until recently, most archives compiled their indexing systems on a series of index cards, similar to a card catalog in a library. As computers have become more popular and more readily available, archives across the country have begun to index their material on computer.

With a system of indexing in place, the archivist must evaluate the collection and determine the best placement of each item. This step is one of the most time-consuming and often most frustrating for the archivist. Most items slide easily into the niches devised for them, but there are many that resist classification. This is why the archivist is forced to keep constantly informed of current scholarship and genre classification issues. As time passes, genres are interpreted and perceived differently, and adjustments are made to definitions.

At all times, the archivist must keep in mind that the archive is only valuable if a researcher can easily access the material. Patrons of a folklore archive can maximize their research time by having a specific topic in mind, with key words and phrases that will help the archivist locate the needed material. The more information provided the archivist, the more he or she will be able to help in research. Flexibility is also important because folklore is not always classified as one might expect.

Those collecting material that will eventually be archived should contact the particular archive intended as the recipient in order to find out what format to use and what contextual information to include. In this way, archive contributions will be more valuable. There are several ways to find an archive in a specific area. The *Folklife Source Book*, available through the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress, has



Folklorist Blanton Owen numbers his slides taken in 1978 for the American Folklife Center's Blue Ridge Parkway Folklife Project. Photo Margaret Counts. American Folklife Center.

an extensive list of archives in the United States. Those who have Internet access can find a list through the Library of Congress LC Marvel gopher.

Kristi Bell

Alana Paige Kimbel

References

Archive Sources. 1989. In *Folklore, Folklife*. Washington, DC: American Folklore Society, pp. 17–18.

Bartis, Peter, and Hillary Glatt. 1993. *Folklife Sourcebook: A Directory of Folklife Resources in the United States*. 2d ed. Washington, DC: American Folklife Center.

Camp, Charles, ed. 1989. *Time and Temperature*. A Centennial Publication of the American Folklore Society. Washington, DC: American Folklore Society.

Wilson, William A. 1993. Mormon Folklore: Cut from the Marrow of Everyday Experience. *BYU Studies* 33 (3):521–541.

See also Archive of Folk Culture; Fieldwork

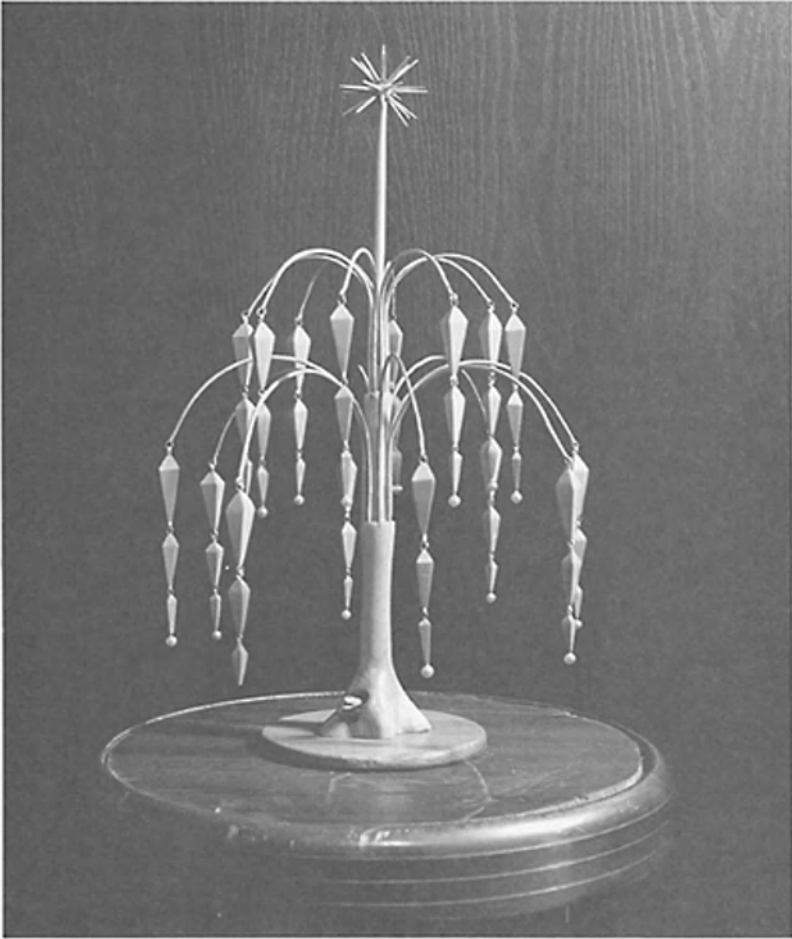
Art, Folk

Objects of aesthetic expression usually appreciated for their traditional aspects. Most artworks identified as folk come from traditional cultures and are learned in a nonacademic face-to-face interchange. While folk art often seems to be synonymous with ethnic art (Hmong storycloths, Amish quilts, or Mexican American death carts), it also comes from traditional communities held together by ties related to occupation, region, religion, generation, politics, economics, or family. While there is a continuing debate over precisely how to define folk art, generally speaking, most scholars agree that the boundaries for art categories such as folk, fine, tourist, ethnic, or popular are fluid.

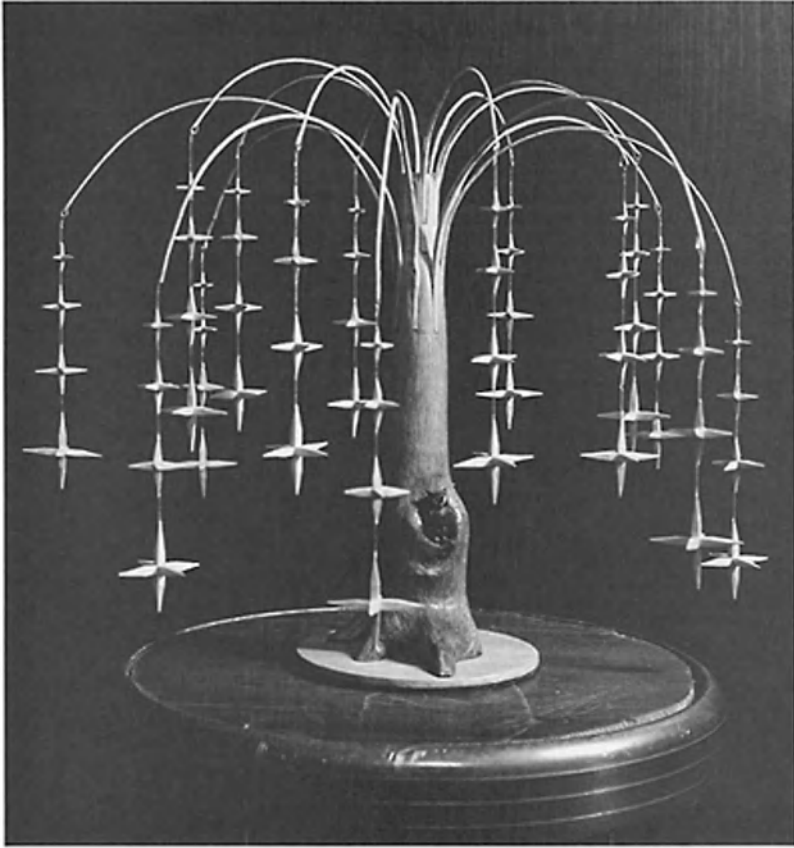
Since the beginning of the 20th century, folk-art study in the United States has been influenced by antique collecting, European class structures, museum practices, modernist perspectives of fine art, and varying approaches to the study of all art within different academic disciplines. In the United States, folk art's "beginnings" (which ignored the work of Native Americans, classifying it as "primitive") were first identified with new immigrants who continued their European traditions. These new citizens often settled in communities with others from their country of origin. While there was sharing among varying cultural groups, thereby somewhat changing the weaving, the basket, the carving, or the pottery, many traditional practices of ritualistic use or content remained.

Originally, the creator of folk art was usually seen as a rural, nonliterate, poor, and isolated individual. This approach probably grew out of the European way of identifying folk artists as peasants. Holger Cahill, who was influential in folk art's early study, believed that the great period of American folk art covered the second quarter of the 17th century up to the third quarter of the 19th century.

It was not until the early part of the 20th century that American folk art gained recognition outside of the community of origin. The first "discovery" came from members of the group we call fine artists. Artists such as Peggy Bacon, Alexander Brook, Charles Demuth, Yasya Kuniyoshi, Robert



*Garden-of-Eden tree made by
Lithuanian-American woodcarver
Vilius Variakojis; a snake's head
emerges from the base of the trunk.
Chicago, 1977. Photo Jonas
Dovydenas. American Folklife Center.*



Night-sky tree made by Lithuanian-American woodcarver Vilius Variakojis. Chicago, 1977. Photo Jonas Dovydenas. American Folklife Center.

Laurent, Elie Nadelman, and William Zorach appreciated both the immediacy and the directness of the work as well as the kinds of materials that were used, often wood and iron. Besides these artists, early collectors included the Rockefellers, the Kaplans, and the Lipmans. Little attention was paid to documentation of the artists or their contexts, thereby encouraging the idea of folk art as anonymous. Edith Halpert and Cahill are credited with initiating widespread public acceptance of folk art and the collecting of it as “proper” artistic expression. By “proper,” they meant that they viewed folk art as objects with aesthetic value based on formalist approaches, rather than objects coming from traditional communities that functioned in ritualistic or utilitarian ways.

In the 1920s, artists and collectors would flock to rural Maine in the summer to gather paintings, carvings, weather vanes, gravestones, and ship and architectural carvings.

Americans were interested in having a separate identity from Europe, and they believed that folk art would help us understand our own cultural heritage. In addition, as the United States became more industrial, many citizens wanted to keep the past alive. They theorized that if the folk arts continued to thrive, important elements of the past would continue. The notion prevailed that the best folk art was that which was old.

For many years, *Art in America* and *Antiques* were the only periodicals that would publish articles on folk art. Because collector Jean Lipman was the editor of *Art in America* from 1940 to 1971, articles about folk art were encouraged. Alice Winchester, another early-20th-century collector, was the editor of *Antiques* for many years. This magazine was largely responsible for stimulating and maintaining an interest in folk art (viewed as closely aligned with antiques) during that time. In 1950, an issue of *Antiques* was published that solicited definitions for the term “folk art” from people who had either written about it, collected it, or exhibited it. Most of the writers were “art-” oriented people (as opposed to folklore-, history-, or anthropology-oriented people), and they described folk art from the object point of view (as opposed to a context perspective). However, even among these writers, there did not seem to be much of a common focus.

The first widely acclaimed collection of American folk art was begun in the 1920s by Abby Aldrich Rockefeller with the help of Edith Halpert, who was then the director of the Downtown Gallery in New York. This collection is housed at the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg, Virginia. Electra Havemeyer’s collection began as early as 1910 when she married J. Watson Webb. In 1947, the Webbs founded the Shelburne Museum in Shelburne, Vermont. During this period, Eleanor and Mabel van Alstyne also developed a strong collection, which they gave to the Smithsonian Institution in 1964. Jean Lipman’s collection was bought by Stephen C. Clark in 1950 for the New York Historical Association in Cooperstown, and Henry F. du Pont made his home into the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum in Winterthur, Delaware. His house is full of many folk-art masterpieces. Henry Ford’s extensive collection is in the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, which also includes some folk art. More recently, Herbert Hemphill gave his extensive collection to the Smithsonian, and Michael and Julie Hall made a gift of their folk art to the Milwaukee Art Center in Wisconsin.

The first public folk-art exhibition, organized by Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, was in 1924 at the Whitney Studio Club in New York City. Since then, the momentum and interest in exhibiting folk art have been building. In 1932 the Museum of Modern Art in New York City exhibited a show called *American Folk Art: The Art of the Common Man in America, 1750–1900*. Included were oil paintings on glass, cookie molds, wood and metal sculptures, plaster ornaments, ships’ figureheads, toys, carved wooden cigar-store Indians, weather vanes, decoys, metal stove plates and figures, and ornamental eagles and roosters. The majority of works in this show and other early ones were from New England. The idea of folk art as art by the common, everyday person persevered. Because of the enthusiasm for these kinds of objects by antique collectors, many handmade objects that had been called “antique” were now being called “folk.”

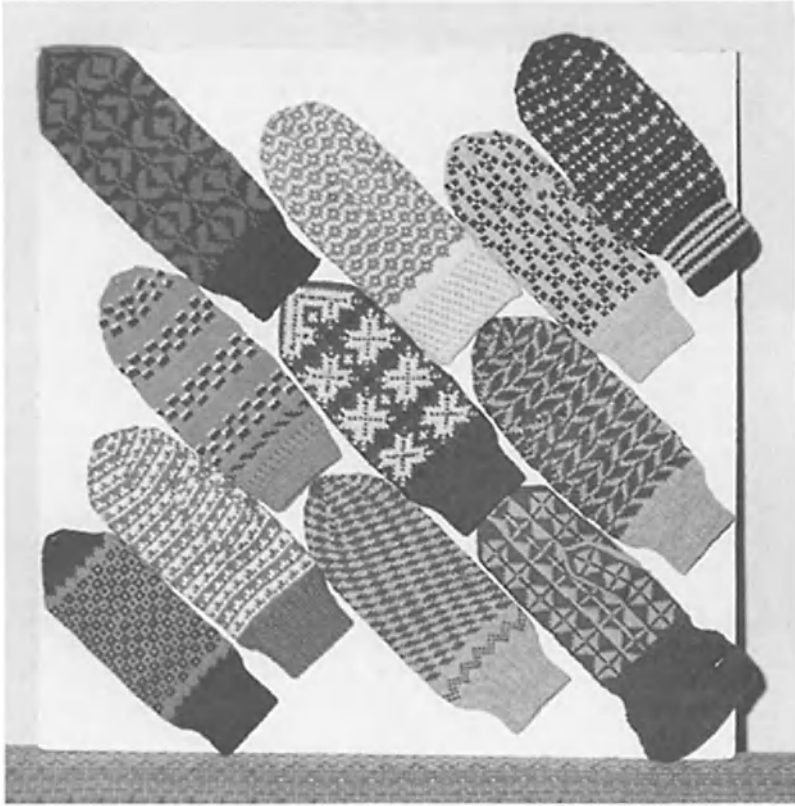
The Depression years brought about the Works Progress Administration (WPA). This federal program funded not only the collection of ballads and other oral folklore, but also an assemblage of art objects from rural areas. It also helped create hundreds of day and evening art classes at schools and community groups across the country. Art was seen as

important and necessary, and for people everywhere, including folk artists, the sense that art was a worthwhile activity was promoted.

The *Index of American Design* is one of the most comprehensive documentations of 18th- and 19th-century arts and crafts. It was one of many projects initiated in the spirit of



*Florence Cheek stands with her quilt
“on the order of Trip Around the
World.” Traphill, North Carolina,
1978. Photo Pat Mullen. American
Folklife Center.*



*Mittens knitted by Stase Tallat-Kelpsa,
using traditional Lithuanian motifs.
Chicago, 1977. Photo Jonas
Dovydenas. American Folklife Center.*

Franklin D. Roosevelt with the expressed intent of giving the nation a sense of wholeness and the “common” people a sense of pride and worthiness during troubled times. This book was edited in 1950 by Erwin O. Christensen, and it recorded 22,000 art representations, many of them considered folk art.

In the 1950s and 1960s, researchers began to look to the South and West as the idea of what could be considered folk art expanded. In 1970, Herbert Hemphill organized the exhibition *Twentieth-Century Folk Art and Artists* at the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City. This show was notable because it appeared to be the first time 20th-century American folk art (beyond the realm of painting) had been so broadly explored by a major institution. Folk art began to lose some of its close identity with antiques. This exhibit included wood carving, *santos* of the New Mexican religious tradition, neon road signs, toys, decoys, fabric and needlework pieces, assemblage pieces, and photographs showing examples of fantasy gardens and environments, storefront art, graveyard art, and

scarecrows. It made folk art appear abundant and important in 20th-century America. Additionally, folk art appeared to be alive and well all over the country.

In 1974 another major show, curated by Alice Winchester, took place at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. It was called *The Flowering of American Folk Art, 1776–1876*, and it is credited by some as the first exhibition to survey “the entire range of folk art,” which is and was, of course, an impossible task. It is interesting to note that the popular magazine *Art News* critiqued the catalog book, written by Jean Lipman, as disturbingly having more focus on biography than stylistic analysis. The art object, clearly, was being more connected to the artist, and the idea of folk art as anonymous art was fading.

In the 1970s, as state and regional arts councils flourished, geographical regions began to research and curate shows. These shows were usually coordinated by folklorists, trained to see folk art as a traditional process rather than as an isolated object to be viewed against a white wall and appreciated for its formalistic design elements. The cultural community in which an artist lived and worked was determined to be important to the understanding and appreciation of the artistic process and, in turn, the way the product was understood and appreciated. The *Early Art in the Genesee Valley* exhibit in 1974 concentrated on one region in New York state. It was set up to reveal “the social function of arts during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in the Genesee Valley by the display of artifacts locally manufactured or locally owned.” This show emphasized that the objects exhibited were to return to people and houses instead of museums. In other words, the objects functioned within the daily lives of individuals and communities, and, therefore, their return was viewed as important.

The 1978 Michigan Folk Art Show, organized by C.Kurt Dewhurst and Marsha MacDowell at Michigan State University, identified folk artists in four different ways that incorporated both conservative definitions focusing on tradition and community belonging, and individual expression and the influence of technology. This approach was an attempt to incorporate a broad enough definition to include both the traditional and the vernacular artist. However, in general, subsequent folk-art shows coordinated by folklorists holding positions as state folk-arts coordinators, attempted to define folk art as more traditionally bound. Additionally, they made attempts to portray the meanings and functions of the objects in people’s lives. Good examples of these types of exhibitions were those held in 1980 in Oregon (coordinated by Suzie Jones) and in Utah (by Hal Cannon).

Within the last few decades, folk-art publications and exhibitions have come from two major directions. Generally speaking, museums utilize the art-historical approach, which has traditionally looked at the folk-art object from an aesthetic perspective. When folklorists are involved with the research and display, the exhibit direction becomes more contextual. Also, some curators and art historians lean toward a folkloric approach to folk art. Probably the three most active museums in exhibiting and publishing works on folk art have been the Museum of American Folk Art in New York City, the Winterthur Museum in Delaware, and the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Museum in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Most of the fifty states have folk-art coordinators, who have not only surveyed their regions for folk art and exhibited the works, but also often coordinate folk festivals in an effort to educate the public on the relationship among the artist, the object, and the artist’s

community. Publications resulting from these programs emphasize the cultural community, the ways the object is used and appreciated, and the values and beliefs that are communicated. Folk-arts coordinators have also been active in developing folk arts in education programs, in which folk artists are employed to teach about local traditions. These programs, like many folk-art projects, are often funded by the Folk Arts Division of the National Endowment for the Arts. Apprenticeship awards, folklore fieldwork, and other folkloric activities are also often supported by this federal agency.

As the 20th century comes to an end, avenues for communication have increased, and competition over the study of folk art has blossomed, but there remains a lack of consensus on the definition of folk art. Over the last one hundred years, many words and phrases have been used to define folk art, many of which are demeaning, classist, racist, colonialist, and just plain narrow-minded. Among the terms used are: simplistic, provincial, childlike, a dying art form, copied, antique, nonacademic, unsophisticated, naive, primitive, untrained, unprofessional, handiwork, utilitarian, art by isolates, outsider, grass-roots, and peasant art.

In 1977 the Henry Francis du Pont Winterthur Museum held a conference on American folk art with Scott Swank as chair. It was an attempt to have scholars from different areas (university professors, museum directors, collectors, and specialists in folklore and material culture) analyze traditional views on folk art and look for new ones. At the same time, there was a folk-art show on display at the Brandywine River Museum. The show was developed in conjunction with the Winterthur Museum and expressed some of the new directions its curators wished to pursue with folk art. The new (and old) perspectives, which were discussed at the conference and at the exhibit, stirred controversy among attendees. The result was perhaps more confusion, less consensus, and increased alienation among groups interested in the study of folk art. The 1980 anthology *Perspectives on American Folk Art*, edited by Ian M.G. Quimby and Swank, was a result of these events.

Since the early 1970s, folklorists have become increasingly interested in folk art. Early folklore scholars who led the way include Louis Jones from Cooperstown, New York; Michael Owen Jones (1989), who did an early extensive study on a chairmaker in the Kentucky mountains; Henry Glassie, who studies vernacular architecture; and John Michael Vlach, who continues to do studies in African American folk art and material culture. While anthropologists have studied folk art in far-off places, they have, generally speaking, neglected folk art study in the United States. Because of anthropology's absence in American folk-art study, folklore's late entry, and museum collectors' earlier hold on the approach to folk art, there remain conflict in defining folk art, political turf guarding of funding sources, and general disagreement over what objects to study as folk and how to study them.

In many respects, it is the folkloric approach to the study of art that permits an emphasis to be placed on the holistic creative process. Whereas a fine-art perspective usually entails a product-boundaried approach in its categorization, a folklorist will study many aspects of the creative process, often focusing on that which is traditional. One of the most often identified areas of tradition a folklorist will emphasize in defining a work as "folk" is how the tradition is learned. The tradition, then, is identified in the process of passing on certain community values and beliefs from one generation to another during the learning process. Examples would be Leon "Peck" Clark, a Mississippi basket maker

who learned to weave from a community member; George Lopez of Cordova, New Mexico, a sixth-generation *santos* carver whose children also carve; or the African American families from Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina, who weave baskets in similar ways to their African ancestors. Folklorists say that folk art cannot be learned in academic settings; it is the informality of the process and the community-based values passed on that makes the work “folk.” This process of defining folk art becomes problematic when one begins looking at more formal apprenticeship programs such as those in which the traditional boatbuilder in Mississippi is taught. While the boats and the artists are said to be traditional, the learning mode has been formalized. Or, in the case of orthodontists trained at the University of Washington to learn soldering skills by making art, when many of these students graduate they continue to make soldered sculptures, often informally sharing them with their former fellow students and other local orthodontists.

Some folklorists like to emphasize the tradition that exists in the creative process. For example, one Canadian Northwest Coast Indian carver learns his craft from his father by working on his own totem pole, imitating each move he sees his father make. As a result, the two poles are basically identical. Michael Owen Jones recognizes that more often the ideas, techniques, and skills that are passed on from one individual to another incorporate some change. However, there is a tendency toward conformity in these procedures. In fact, most folklore scholars agree that new tools and updated technology might also be used in the re-creation of a folk piece. For example, if an Oregon logger who learned traditional carving techniques from other loggers decided to switch to a chain saw, the artwork and creative process would still be considered “folk.” On the other hand, one must recognize that artists who are academically trained also employ certain traditional techniques and skills they learn in the classroom. These skills may have to do with the way to wedge clay or how to pull a pot from the potter’s wheel, but traditional creative processes are certainly passed on.

The most product-oriented way of looking at folk art is to find tradition in the content of the object. In other words, a carved piece of scrimshaw made by a Newfoundland fisherman should have on it a traditional motif in order for the work to be considered “folk.” Folk-art totem poles are made with traditional images of whales, ravens, or bears, and quilts are created from traditional patterns passed down from mother to daughter. However, in fine art, there is also tradition in the content of art objects. For example, in European paintings, the still-life bowl of fruit is ubiquitous, as is the reclining female nude. Many artists make a series of similar works that explore one topic or idea. For example, Alberto Giacometti spent many years making the same thin, standing figures over and over again.

Some scholars look to the style of an art object for traditional aspects. Certainly there is no one style that can be used to identify all folk art. However, there are stylistic traditions within folk-art expressions. Hmong storycloths are often embroidered on a blue background with bright colors reflecting similar scenes of villages and animals. Loggers carve similar kinds of chains and fans, and Pueblo potters utilize traditional clays, surface design elements, and firing practices to produce pottery recognizable to their region. In like fashion, fine artists, too, are grouped with those who share similar ideas about style. The Impressionists have stylistic similarities as do the Cubists, the Expressionists, and the Futurists.

Many folk-art survey books organize themselves around the form of the object. There are chapters on quilts, wood carvings, scrimshaw, weather vanes, gravestones, or circus figures. This also poses problems in differentiating folk-art classification systems since fine-art and popular-art books might also be organized in the same manner. In other words, there is nothing exclusive about the form of a quilt that makes it automatically folk art. Clearly, today many quilts are made that are categorized as fine art for a variety of reasons. Additionally, many artists today use traditional practices and re-create them in innovative ways. Such is the process of New York artist Miriam Schapiro.

Folklorists often look for tradition in the context of an object to determine if it is folk art. The question is raised, is dulcimer making “folk” when carried out in the Ozarks, but not when done in California? Does the tradition somehow exist in the human and physical environment as an extension of the individual? The difficulty lies in determining whether or not a certain set of values, attitudes, and beliefs is a part of the artist’s context. But as folk art is continually changing, how much change is acceptable within its boundaries is not easily stated. Potters in the Central and Western states learned new skills and techniques from ceramicists who, traveling west from the southeastern states, brought with them a unique alkaline form of glazing, wheel-turned handles, and the groundhog kiln; decoys were made by White settlers who imitated the Indians’ bird lures; and quilt patterns have been shared among diverse groups of women, although the names are often changed to fit specific local beliefs.

When folklorists study folk art, they inevitably look to how it is used within its context. Some scholars theorize that folk art is often so ingrained in the lives of everyday people that it is not differentiated from other activities, thereby defusing any need to refer to it as art. New England samplers were commonplace between 1620 and 1860; quilts, in many communities, were often made for every room of the house; and weaving rooms were part of every plantation until 1785. Likewise, Native American baskets were (and on some reservations still are) made for hauling loads, storage, winnowing, sifting, and even housing rattlesnakes. However, this definitional approach is problematic because popular forms such as comics, television, and movies, and fine-art forms such as park sculptures and elite architecture, also have their place in our everyday lives. Another way this issue has been approached is to say that much folk art is utilitarian. However, as Ruth Bunzel has pointed out, many traditional cultures also make art simply to gratify the aesthetic impulse. One example is the bone and ivory carvings of the Eskimos. Another categorization problem is that often the traditional artist makes a decision to create for the collector. When carver Lem Ward from Crisfield, Maryland, makes a decoy that ends up on a collector’s shelf somewhere outside Ward’s community, is it no longer folk art?

Some folklorists suggest that tradition resides not so much in the object itself as in the extension of the premises and assumptions that are shared and transmitted over time and space within a small community of people. However, it is clear that elite artists in many ways share common jargon, values, aesthetics, and folk tales. As much as fine artists are often viewed as isolates, studies like Howard Becker’s *Art Worlds* (1982) clearly demonstrate the collaborative process of all artwork. Nonetheless, as Jones (1987) points out, the idea of “the folk” is misleading. When we discuss aesthetics, we realize that one person’s values will not necessarily agree with another’s, because we all belong to several folk groups at one time. The importance of tradition in the appreciation process should not be dismissed, however, just because of the difficulties in understanding it. As

with the other aspects of folk art discussed, although problems exist definitionally, the manner in which the object is appreciated and the community accepts it are primary aspects in understanding folk art. For many folk artists, to have an identity and acceptance with the rest of the folk group is important. If an artist is seen as a renegade, his or her art begins to be viewed in the category of fine art.

Besides the importance of tradition, there are several other factors that go into defining a work of art as "folk": folk art is intended to be used in everyday life among members of a small, close group; it functions as a remembrance of the past or as a demonstration of respect for elders; it is made by persons who do not call themselves artists as readily as creators from other art groups do; and the artist and/or group members use a different language structure from the art school- or university-trained artist to talk about their work.

Kristin G. Congdon

References

- Ames, Kenneth L. 1977. *Beyond Necessity: Art in the Folk Tradition*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- Andrews, Ruth, ed. 1977. *How to Know American Folk Art*. New York: Dutton.
- Cahill, Holger. 1932. *American FolkArt: The Art of the Common Man in America, 1750–1900*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- Ferris, William, ed. 1983. *Afro-American Folk Art and Crafts*. Boston: G.K.Hall.
- Glassie, Henry. 1989. *The Spirit of Folk Art: The Girard Collection at the Museum of International Folk Art*. New York: Harry N.Abrams.
- Jones, Michael Owen. 1987. *Exploring Folk Art: Twenty Years of Thought on Craft, Work, and Aesthetics*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- . 1989. *Craftsman of the Cumberlands: Tradition and Creativity*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Thompson, Robert Farris. 1983. *Flash of the Spirit: American and Afro-American Art and Philosophy*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Vlach, John Michael, and Simon J.Bronner, eds. 1986. *Folk Art and Art Worlds*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- See also* Crafts; Folk Museums; Folklife Movement; Index of American Design; Material Culture; Outsider Art; Paper Cutting; Tattooing

Asch, Moses (1905–1986)

Founder and director of Folkways Records, the prototype of small, independent folk-music record companies. Asch was born in Warsaw, Poland, to a family of Jewish writers, scholars, and revolutionaries; his father was Sholem Asch, the most widely read Yiddish author in the years between the World Wars. From him Asch acquired a profound sense of the importance of artistic independence. Asch was first schooled outside Paris, and then in the New York City public schools after the family immigrated to the United States in 1915. Although he never finished high school, he spent two years in a German *hochschule* studying electronics and radio technology. Upon returning to New York in 1925 he worked in the radio business, later establishing his own company, Radio Laboratories, and branching into the field of public address systems before entering the commercial recording market in 1941.

Asch's first records were of Jewish liturgical music (cantorials) for his "Asch" label. He initially ventured beyond the Jewish field by recording the African American singer Huddie Ledbetter (Lead Belly) in 1941. Although he found financial success recording jazz artists during World War II (and until the bankruptcy of his second recording company, Disc, in 1947), it was also during the war that he began recording those singers and instrumentalists who became the pantheon of American folk music, including Woody Guthrie, Cisco Houston, Pete Seeger, Sonny Terry, and Josh White.

Asch established Folkways Records and Service in 1948 with his secretary, Marion Distler, and ran it until his death in 1986. While often imperious, he was also revered by many because of his insistence upon principles of artistic, cultural, and historical worth that were often at odds with the commercial constraints of the record business.

Peter D. Goldsmith

References

- Shelton, Robert. 1960. Folkways in Sound; or, The Remarkable Enterprises of Mr. Moe Asch. *High Fidelity* (June):42–44 ff.
- Sherman, Tony. 1987. The Remarkable Recordings of Moses Asch. *Smithsonian* 18 (5):110–121.
- Young, Israel. 1977. Moses Asch, Twentieth Century Man. Parts 1–2. *Sing Out!* 26 (1–2):2–6, 25–29.
- See also* Folkways Records; Revivalism

Auctions

Method of selling in which the price or value of merchandise is set by the buyer through a competitive bidding process. The bidding may be accomplished through written, oral, or gestural responses to offers, and most often follows an ascending price pattern. The auction process provides an efficient vehicle for the redistribution of large quantities of varied merchandise and for setting a market value on items of unknown or variable value. Most auctions are led by an auctioneer, who functions as the intermediary between buyer and seller and who generally plays a large role in organizing and conducting the sale. Except in the case of some charity auctions, auctioneers conducting sales are trained, licensed professionals.

The auction process involves a wide variety of merchandise and situations: real estate, personal property, full estates including both real and personal property, livestock, automobiles, and fish and produce (from fresh-cut flowers to tobacco). Those auctions serving a wholesale market, where goods are purchased for resale, generally attract professional or semiprofessional buyers. Folklorists most often study community-based auctions that involve the general public: estate sales, local livestock sales, and sale barns or auctions held on a regular basis at a fixed location where individuals bring lots of merchandise to be sold by the auctioneer. Such sales offer particularly fertile ground for folkloristic inquiry, in part because the social process and the economic process are so closely intertwined.

One initial task in the investigation of any auction is to identify, through the collection of quantifiable data, the actual demographics of the community present at the sale. The distance a participant traveled to attend the sale; the relationship among participants, the auctioneer, and the owner of the merchandise; the methods through which a participant learned of a sale; and the participant's reasons for attending a sale—these are some of the factors that help describe the social dynamics of this economic process.

Folkloristic inquiry identifies a number of areas in which the interaction of auction participants creates and maintains traditions that further define the economic process of buying and selling. The ways in which goods are exhibited for sale, the order in which items are sold, the kinds of goods that are not sold (for example, some auctioneers will not sell a Bible at auction) and whether that decision is based on personal preference or state law, the operation of food concessions (who sells what and why) at a sale, and the manner in which a sale is advertised to the public are all factors frequently determined by community-based tradition and precedent.

The verbal artistry of the auction process—perhaps the most easily recognized, most familiar, and most investigated aspect of the auction sale—is also shaped by community-based tradition. Though most auctioneers attend training schools where they receive some instruction in crying or chanting a sale, skillful auctioneers perfect this art through the lengthy traditional process of observation and imitation—through working with, and around, other successful auctioneers. The smooth patter combines the repetition of a current bid with the request for a higher bid, frequently interspersed with nonsense

syllables that enhance the singsong rhythm of the chant. Most auctioneers punctuate their sales with jokes, stories, and personal exchanges with individuals in the crowd, all of which serve to keep people involved in the sale and to bolster the atmosphere of community and play that permeates the general sale. Community-based values and experiences shape these exchanges, which help the auctioneer balance the need to push



*Matt Burnett conducts an auction.
Near Woolwine, Virginia, 1978. Photo
Blanton Owen. American Folklife
Center.*

the bid higher with the need to maintain a personal rapport with buyers.

Narratives told about auctions comprise yet another traditional genre that sheds much light on the nature and meaning of the auction sale. Frequently told as personal narratives or as the experiences of the infamous friend of a friend, these tales and anecdotes educate auction attendees about the specifics of the auction process and its role—both actual and perceived—in a community. Stories regarding unintentional (and generally outrageous) purchases accomplished through a wave to a friend or the scratch of an ear, and stories involving great treasures uncovered through the purchase of junk merchandise (the sofa or baking soda can stuffed with bills), circulate regularly in any community where auctions are held. The latter story is particularly interesting in that generally the marvelous treasure is returned to the estate—a remarkable act of generosity underscoring the perception of the auction as a community-based and equitable means for the redistribution of property

Phyllis Harrison

References

- Aibel, Robert, Ben Levin, Chris Musello, and Jay Ruby 1984. *A Country Auction: The Paul V. Leitzel Estate Sale*. 16mm. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Audio-Visual Services. Color Film and Videotape.
- Cohen, D. *Going, Going, Going*. Pordand, OR: Rasperry Wood Productions. Videotape.
- Ferris, Bill. [1977]. *Ray Lum: Mule Trader*. Memphis, TN: Center for Southern Folklore. Multimedia Package.
- Harrison, Phyllis. 1979. Indiana Auctioneering: No Two Sales the Same. *Indiana Folklore* 12:101–119.
- Jansen, William Hugh. 1956. Down Our Way: Who'll Bid Twenty? *Kentucky Folklore Record* 2:113–121.
- Marsh, Anne, and William Aspinall Jr. 1971. Harold E. Leightley: Portrait of an Auctioneer and His Craft. *Keystone Folklore Quarterly* 16:133–150.

Austin, Mary Hunter (1868–1934)

Writer best known for nonfiction and fiction works on nature and native cultures in California and the Southwest. Born and raised in Carlinville, Illinois, she moved to central California in 1888. In 1892 she began a prolific career pursued in Carmel's art colony after 1905, in New York City and Europe, and in Santa Fe's art colony from 1924 until her death.

A mystic and naturalist with a college degree in sciences, Austin developed her environmentalism in arid and semiarid regions and was active in the Western conservation movement, including campaigns against the Boulder Dam project in the 1920s. An antimodernist, she proposed ecologically and artistically integrated "folk-life" as the antidote for American rootlessness, and native village socialism as an alternative to 1920s European communism. Her regionalism highlights the sociocultural contributions of women, Hispanics, and especially Indians to an envisioned "multiethnic democracy" grounded in authentic indigenous expressions. In 1925 Austin helped organize both the Indian Arts Fund and the Spanish Colonial Arts Society in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Austin wrote and lectured about folktales, folk drama, and various other folk arts, but her most extensive folklore research focused on Amerindian song/poetry, a model for poetic evolution in all societies and the measure for true American poetry because of its attunement to a set of rhythms peculiar to the American environment. The crucial "landscape line" involves melody, emotion, and ideation. She did song and tale translations/reexpressions, criticizing both anthropological and literary folklore collectors and translators for exercising too little or too much "creative intelligence." Although never fully accepted by either ethnologists or literati, Austin was influential in publicizing the Indian cultures she primarily championed.

Marta Weigle

References

- Austin, Mary. 1903. *The Land of Little Rain*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- . 1923. *The American Rhythm: Studies and Reexpressions of American Songs*. New York: Harcourt, Brace.
- . 1924. *The Land of Journeys' Ending*. New York and London: Century.
- . 1934. *One-Smoke Stories*. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin.
- Blend, Benay. 1988. Mary Austin and the Western Conservation Movement, 1900–1927. *Journal of the Southwest* 30:12–34.
- Fink, Augusta. 1983. *I-Mary: A Biography of Mary Austin*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Autoharp

A type of zither played by pushing down chord bars. It was designed by Karl August Gutter in Markneukirchen, Germany, in 1884 and first manufactured in the United States in 1885 by Charles F. Zimmerman.

The autoharp consists of a wooden sound box with thirty-six to thirty-eight strings tuned to either a chromatic or a diatonic scale. From three to twenty-one movable bars, called chord bars, are suspended across the strings. The bars have felt pads attached, and these pads are spaced on the chord bar so that when they are pressed against the strings, certain strings are dampened. The undampened strings make up the notes of a designated chord. By pushing down a series of chord bars and strumming or plucking the strings, either a musical accompaniment or a melody can be played.

In 1871 Zimmerman patented a system of numerical musical notation. To promote its use, he designated a stringed instrument that he called an “autoharp” and patented in 1882. However, when he began manufacturing the instrument in 1885, it deviated greatly from his original design and more closely resembled the *volkszither* patented in England by Karl Gutter. It is thought that Zimmerman used Gutter’s design because it was easier to manufacture.

Autoharps have been manufactured by several different companies since then. A popular instrument between 1892 and 1897, with 300,000 produced, it declined in popularity until the 1950s when Oscar Schmidt International began promoting the instrument to school music programs. This promotion and the 1960s “folk revival” spurred its continuing popularity.

The development of the autoharp as a folk instrument was molded by publications. There have been few autoharp teachers, so people learned to play from self-instructional books included with their instrument. The earliest of these was *Collection of Popular Figure Music for C.F. Zimmermans Miniatur* [sic] *Autoharp*, published in 1885.

Depictions of playing the autoharp in the 1890s show it lying flat on a tabletop or on a horizontal stand. The strings were plucked or strummed below the chord-bar assembly. The manuals of the 1890s instructed the student to do rhythm accompaniment strums with the thumb and first finger and pluck melody strings with the first finger. The autoharp was used mostly for accompaniment and acquired the nickname “idiot zither” because it was so easy to play in that way.

In the 1890s, the autoharp began to be played as a melody instrument. Between 1895 and 1897, Aldis Gery toured the United States with the Victor Herbert Band playing popular tunes on a “Concert Grand” autoharp. Around 1900 the autoharp was introduced to the Southern mountain region through mail-order catalogs and door-to-door sales. It was also the “mountain piano” of rural missionaries.

Mike Seeger documented several playing styles of the early 1900s on the 1965 recording *Mountain Music Played on the Autoharp*. All of the players laid the autoharp on their laps or on a table. They played the strings below the chord bars. Their repertoires consisted of waltzes, hymns, and simple reels. Neria Benfield from North Carolina played melody notes with the back of his first fingernail plucking the string in a frailing banjo style. Accompaniment was done with the thumb or first finger. Ernest Stoneman from Virginia plucked the melody string with his first finger and simultaneously plucked

a bass harmony note with his thumb. Accompaniment was done by the thumb or the first finger moving back and forth across the strings. On September 6, 1924, Stoneman made the first record using the autoharp. Sara Carter popularized lap-style playing when she played rhythm accompaniment on the autoharp with the Carter Family from 1927 to 1943. This style of playing was common until the 1950s.

In the 1950s, Maybelle Carter, who played guitar with the Carter Family, began performing on the autoharp holding it upright against her chest. This made it easier to play into a microphone. She also began playing the strings above the chord bars, which gave the instrument a softer sound. This style became known as the “Appalachian style,” and by the 1970s it had almost completely replaced lap-style playing. Meg Peterson authored several instructional books in the 1960s that illustrated this new style.

Prior to the 1970s, autoharp strings were tuned to a chromatic scale. Then Bryan Bowers, a popular performer, began tuning his strings to a diatonic scale. This allowed him to double tune some strings to the same tone, much like a twelve-string guitar. Tuned this way, the autoharp produced a fuller sound. Bowers still played in a traditional “closedchord style,” pushing a chord bar against the strings for every melody note played. Ron Wall developed a method of playing with diatonic tuning in an “open-chord style,” in which some of the melody strings are played without any chord bars being depressed. Now autoharps are tuned to many different scales, and they are played in both open-and closed-chord styles.

The most comprehensive review of autoharp history is Becky Blackley’s *The Autoharp Book* (1983), which includes descriptions of all autoharp models from 1885 to 1983. In 1963, A.Doyle Moore published the first scholarly paper on its history.

The first magazine for autoharp players was *Autoharpoholic*, published by Becky Blackley beginning in 1980. Other magazines and newsletters that followed were *Autoharp Teachers Digest*, *Autoharp Quarterly*, and *Autoharp Clearinghouse*.

The autoharp’s appearance has not changed much since 1885, and instructional books and magazines still influence its development. A recent trend has been the organization of autoharp contests, clubs, and festivals. Autoharp performers play jazz, blues, Celtic music, and New Age music, in addition to the traditional American music.

Tom Schroeder

References

- Moore, A.Doyle. 1963. The Autoharp: Its Origin and Development from a Popular to a Folk Instrument. *New York Folklore Quarterly*. Reprinted in *Folkstyle Autoharp*, ed. Harry Taussig. New York: Oak Publications, 1967, pp. 10–20.
- Schroeder, Tom. 1991. In the Beginning: Five-Year Review. *Autoharpoholic* 12:6.
- Seeger, Mike. 1965. Liner notes of *Mountain Music Played on the Autoharp*. Folkways Records FA 2365.
- Stiles, Ivan. 1991. The True History of the Autoharp. *Autoharp Quarterly* 3:3–6.
- See also* Carter Family; Revivalism

B

Ballad

A song composed in stanzas sung to a repeating tune that recounts a short, usually single-episodic, tale of complication, climax, and resolution. Since it tells a story, the ballad exhibits certain traits common to other narrative forms of folklore like epic song and fairy tale: It concentrates on the leading character, features two interacting protagonists to a scene (seldom more than three actors in the whole drama), and is a solo performance piece, though it may have a refrain or a chorus for group participation.

Of the several forms of American folksong, ballads have received the bulk of scholarly attention, and of that bulk the Anglo American ballad has received the largest share. It is to the Anglo American tradition, therefore, that this entry is pertinent, though many of the generalizations also apply to Mexican American traditions (especially the romance and corrido genres) and to some African American traditions. Indeed, one of the ballad types discussed below, the blues ballad, is found in the repertoires of both Black and White folksingers. At the most general level, we customarily distinguish four subtypes of ballad in Anglo American culture: the medieval, or Child, ballad, the broadside ballad, the blues ballad, and the parlor ballad.

The medieval ballad is the oldest. It emerged somewhere in Europe in the late Middle Ages, was fully established as a popular song type in Britain by the late 15th century, and flourished in Scotland especially up to the late 1600s. After 1700, however, almost no new songs were made in the style, though many of the existing ones remained popular in British oral tradition; not surprisingly, many were brought to America and incorporated into our everyday singing occasions. When, more than a hundred years ago, the American scholar Francis James Child set out to make a comprehensive survey and catalog of the British Isles tradition of this medieval ballad type, he could find a total of 305 distinct ballads in the documentary record, some reprinted in old songbooks and street-poetry flyers ("broadsides"), some in published anthologies of songs gathered from oral tradition, and still others in unpublished manuscripts and field notes of 18th- and 19th-century folksong collectors. Child brought together in a single exhaustive work, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1882–1898), all of the versions he could find in his library and archival research, assigning each ballad a number for easy identification and comparison. Most of the 305 he found in several versions from different sources, the number of versions reflecting just how popular any particular ballad had been, how often it had been printed, and how often it had been collected from oral tradition. In honor of Child's seminal work, ballad scholars have given his name to the genre.

In its British tradition, the Child ballad encompassed a range of topics, which can be conveniently divided into four categories: (1) magical and marvelous (the stories that turn on supernatural agency, some grounded in pre-Christian beliefs, some in Christian ones); (2) romantic and tragic (which turn on everyday domestic affairs, mostly love relationships); (3) historical and legendary (ballads on actual events, such as a battle or a crime, or on historical-like topics, such as an exploit of Robin Hood); and (4) humorous. The ballads of the second group, romantic and tragic, are the ones that best transcend cultural and historical specifics and display a more general appeal; they are the kind most likely to be found in panEuropean tradition and, similarly, are the ones most likely to have made the transatlantic crossing and become popular in America.

The specific features that distinguish the Child ballad from its more recent relatives constitute its particular *way* of telling a story. For instance, Child-ballad style tends to be impersonal; that is, not only is the story in third person but it seldom proselytizes. In other words, it doesn't include specific instructions in its text as to how a listener should react to, or evaluate, the personalities and events in its story. It prefers to just present the facts, and one must infer feeling and moral value from what the characters say and do.

The Child ballad also tends to be less expository than the broadside style; it virtually plunges into the heart of its tale, with very little lead into the complication, and ends just as suddenly after the climax has been reached and a resolution swiftly achieved. It tells its tale dramatically, almost acting it out rather than relating it—for example, by often not ascribing its dialogue to a specific speaker. It just gives the speech, and the speaker is implied. Even its imagery is dramatically exaggerated—hair bound with gold, horses shod with silver, roses and briars growing over dead lovers' graves and entwining, and so on. Yet another trait the Child ballad shares with a nonnarrative song genre, the lyric is a strong reliance on stylized, formulaic verse. Certain stanzas appear again and again in different ballads, creating a kind of reservoir of reusable epithets to cover similar situations. Suicides, for example, will usually be described with some variant of "He put the sword handle against the wall/The point against his breast," a bedtime with "The day being gone, the night coming on/ While all men were asleep." Then there is a recurring metrical trait: Child-ballad verse is most commonly of two strophic types, a four-line stanza accented 4/3/4/3 or a two-line stanza accented 4/4.

Though, like all folklore, Child ballads adapt to their environments, contexts, and even settings of performance so that we frequently find variations that localize, modernize, rationalize, or jocularize some old-fashioned or simply too unfamiliar content, a further feature of the type is that modern-day versions still more often than not retain a premodern ambience to their content. Thus, many American versions of these old British ballads still talk about lords and ladies, castles, and ghosts. Finally, perhaps the most striking trait of all, in their structure the Child ballads incorporate a feature most prominent in non-storytelling catalog songs and combine it with storytelling purpose to achieve a highly redundant style of narrative progression that relies heavily on repetition, both exact and incremental, on twofold and threefold parallelisms, and on framing structures that imbed and nest constituent parts within each other in an overall design of great formal symmetry and balance. The repetitions and parallelisms tend to freeze the story, as it were, by lingering on an action for several stanzas before moving on to pause at the next tableau (a technique sometimes called "leaping and lingering").

An excerpt from a Missouri version of Child 81 will illustrate several of these aforementioned traits. Lord Arnold has just surprised Little Matthy Groves in bed with his wife:

“And it’s how do you like my fine feather-bed,
And it’s how do you like my sheets?
And it’s how do you like my gay ladie
That lies in your arms and sleeps?”

“Very well do I like your fine feather-bed.
Very well do I like your sheets
But much better do I like your gay ladie
That lies in my arms and sleeps.”

“Now get you up, little Matthy Groves,
And all your clothes put on;
For it never shall be said in Old England
That I slew a naked man.”

“I will get up,” said little Matthy Groves,
“And fight you for my life,
Though you’ve two bright swords hanging by your
side
And me not a pocket knife.”

“If I’ve two bright swords by my side,
They cost me deep in purse,
And you shall have the better of the two
And I will keep the worse.”

The very first lick that little Matthy struck
He wounded Lord Arnold sore.
But the very first lick that Lord Arnold struck
Little Matthy struck no more.

The broadside ballad style, which succeeded the medieval type in popularity and which remained vital as a compositional model up to the end of the 19th century in the song traditions of North American regional and occupational groups (logging, ranching, coal mining, seafaring), though it lost popularity in more urban centers a bit earlier, coalesces as a distinct type in Britain after 1700. “Broadside” refers to the method by which many

of this type of song made their initial appearance: cheaply printed on single sheets of paper and sold at street corners, market stalls, and fairs by itinerant peddlers. The songs tended to be on actual topics—sensational crimes, military victories, accidents and disasters that claimed many lives—but were often imaginary as well, *especially* when the topics were about courtship and love relations in general.

The conventions of the broadside style can be contrasted with those of the older Child style. For example, the broadside way of telling a story in sung verse tends toward subjectivity; often in first person, often featuring the narrator as an actual participant in the drama, often explicitly passing judgment or loading with sentiment the circumstances related, broadside style has certain similarities with the lyric song. The broadside style is also more expository; in what is often a very journalistic way, it specifies details of time, place, personnel, motive, and so forth that tell more about what's going on, providing an explanatory as well as an interpretive context for its events in a way the Child ballad generally eschews. And broadside ballads aren't as dramatic: Word use is closer to conventional language than is the stylized, exaggerated word use of the older form, and dialogue is ascribed to its speaker rather than just given.

Broadsides are less formulaic than Child ballads, not necessarily in their plots but in the language—their epithets, lines, and stanzas; we don't find as many “floating” verses reused to say essentially the same thing in different ballads. Many broadsides also feature a metrical pattern that extends the shorter ballad stanza considerably to 7/7/7/7 (that is, seven stresses per line in a four-line stanza), though this particular trait seems to be much indebted to the Irish strand of broadside traditions in the New World. Finally, the structure of the broadside style reflects its greater dependence on print for its composition and diffusion, for it does not display nearly the



Mr. and Mrs. Frank Pipkin record for Charles L. Todd. Seen by some as the embodiment of "Ma Joad" in John Steinbeck's novel The Grapes of Wrath, Mrs. Pipkin excelled in singing English ballads. Shafter, California, about 1940. Photo Robert Hemmig. American Folklife Center.

internal redundancy—the catalog trait—of the more highly patterned Child style. The broadside style is more linear and chronologically continuous from stanza to succeeding stanza, with less repetition, parallelism, framing, and “leaping and lingering.”

Illustrative of the broadside style are the first five stanzas of a ballad on a murder in Sullivan County, Missouri, in 1894:

About one mile from Brown town, at the foot of Jenkins' hill,
Took place this awful murder by the Taylors, George and Bill.
Gus Meeks' wife and children were taken from the [their] home,
Were taken by those Taylors to meet their fatal doom.

They wrote to Gus Meeks a letter telling him to be ready at ten
And try to leave the country to save his grace [disgrace] from them.
How little did he think them those Taylors, George and Bill,
That night would murder his family upon the Jenkins hill.

But the hand of Providence came to little Nellie and said [Nellie's aid],
Ere the break of morning safe escape she made.
She came out of her straw-made grave and to Carter's house she came
And told this mournful story, that adds to our country's shame.

She stood before the doorway with that awful gash in her head;
While she sobbed and wept most bitterly these were the words she said:

“Some very cruel men last night came and took us from our bed.
They shot our papa and mama, and thought us three were dead.

“Thev nut us in our wagon and took us to our strawmade grave.

How little did they think them their sad little Nellie would save!
 But Providence was against them; the righteous hand was there
 And willed against those murders little Nellie's life to spare."

G.Malcolm Law Jr. has cataloged broadside ballads in American tradition, placing them in two logical divisions for the purpose: ballads that originated in the British Isles (Laws 1957), and ballads that were made on this continent and treat what are more or less distinctive North American experiences (Laws 1964). Some topics are common to both kinds: for instance, ballads of war, of sailors and the sea, of crime and criminals. More interesting are the differences. In general, broadside ballads originating in Britain and Ireland that took root in American singing tradition heavily favor what the Child ballads that flourished here favor—stories of love affairs that had no actual historical event behind them (stories about parents opposing their childrens' choice of mate, and stories of lovers who employ some disguise or trick in the machinations of courtship were particularly popular)—while ballads made in the United States and Canada tend to favor male occupational experiences, principally of the outdoor, laboring kind (such as cowboying and lumbering), as well as the more sensational sort of topic that Laws places in categories of "murder ballads" and "ballads of tragedies and disasters." These topics are not unknown in British ballads that diffused to America; they simply are not as numerous, as patterned, and as interrelated as indigenous ballads on the same subject and so were incorporated into other categories. The primary value of Laws' catalogs are not as typologies, however, but as systematizations: He gives each ballad an identificatory letterand-number combination for ease of identification—thus, for example, "The Meeks Family Murder" given above is Laws F28.

Unlike the Child and broadside models, the third way of telling a story in song found in Anglo American folk tradition, the blues ballad, is home grown, though similar forms can be found in other cultures, such as Irish Gaelic. Indeed, in both its genesis and its life history, the model is as much an African American one as it is Anglo American. As its name implies, the type emerges from the fusing of the ballad's narrative way of articulating images in sung verse (predominantly a White tradition) with the lyric song's emotive way (in this case, chiefly the Negro lyric style). Like a broadside ballad, though often in a somewhat impressionistic and elliptical way, a blues ballad's topic is situated in an actual event and features an array of specific characters, settings, materials, and actions; like the lyric, however, the song is unified by a heightened mood of lament or celebration rather than by a story line, often drawing as well from a pool of formulaic imagery:

They took him to that cemet'ry
 In a rubber-tired hack,
 They took him to that cemet'ry
 But they did not bring him back.

As far as plot is concerned, the blues ballad is not as linear and continuous as the broadside, favoring the more tableau style of the Child ballad, moving forward to be sure but from striking scene, to dramatic confrontation, to evocative speech in a sequence that is often as much associational as it is chronological. We also often find in blues ballads the repetitions, parallelisms, and other symmetries intrinsic to the Child style:

Sol Matting he lied a-sleeping,
 Poor boy was sleeping so sound,
 When the fire took place in the deck-room
 The night the Bicera burned down.

Chorus: O! the Bicera she hollered,
 O! the Bicera she moaned;
 The City St. Louis did answer
 The night the Bicera burned down.

When she left St. Louis
 She had five hundred men;
 When she got to New Mattick
 She hadn't but a hundred and ten.

Ain't that a pity,
 Ain't it a sin and a shame,
 The fire took place in the deck-room
 The night the Bicera burned down.

The Bicera was a fine boat.
 O! the Bicera she moaned;
 But when she got to New Mattick
 O! the Bicera was gone.

The Bicera was a fine boat,
 Her smoke stacks painted brown,
 When the fire took place...

O! Sol Molting [*sic*] he whooped and he hollered,
 Sol Molting he hollered so strong;
 When the fire took place in the deck-room
 Poor Sol Molting was gone.

Like many African American recreational-song genres, but unlike Anglo American, Child, and broadside ballads, the blues ballad in performance was usually dependent on instrumentation, the singer accompanying himself or herself on banjo or guitar, and instrumental breaks between groups of stanzas were common.

While the Child and the broadside ballad types are widely recognized and studied by folksong scholars, there is less consensus on the status of the blues ballad and, consequently, less scholarly literature on the subject. This is even truer of the fourth ballad type, the parlor, or sentimental, ballad (itself one kind of the more general parlor song, which may come in ballad or in lyric manifestations). The parlor ballad has forebears in Britain that go back several centuries, but those found in American domestic singing tradition by modern-day folksong collectors are mostly of late-19th-century origin, originally popularized in some formal milieu or other, such as a variety hall, a traveling minstrel show, a Chautauqua, or a temperance society meeting, and widely disseminated through songsters and sheet music. As a result, a parlor ballad's composer is often known to us, which is rarely the case with blues ballads, virtually never with broadside and Child ballads.

The distinctiveness of parlor-ballad poetry (tunes tend to be quite distinctive as well) seems to lie in the generally bourgeois sensibility that informs it. Parlor songs in general display more conventionally genteel, refined, elevated feeling and morality, often indeed to the point that, to the outsider, their patriotism appears jingoistic, their virtues pious, their sentiments maudlin. While their composers were undoubtedly more knowledgeable in formal poetic techniques, so that alongside other traditional ballad types parlor ballads appear less formulaic in language and content, more unified in plot and theme, more regular in meter and rhyme, more heterogeneous in verse formats, they do not project to the academic sensibility a world honestly experienced and represented. Plot and character seem contrived, the evocation of emotion manipulative:

I saw a man at early dawn
 Standing by the grogshop door.
 His eyes were sunk, his lips were parched;
 I viewed him o'er and o'er.

Refrain: I viewed him o'er and o'er,
 His eyes were sunk, his lips were parched;
 I viewed him o'er and o'er.

His little girl stood by his side,
 And as to him she said,
 "Father, mother lies sick at home,
 And sister cries for bread."

Refrain: And sister cries for bread, etc.

He staggered off up to the bar,
 Where he had been before,
 And faltering to the landlord said,
 “Oh, give me one glass more.”

Refrain: Oh, give me one glass more, etc.

The landlord arose at his command
 And filled the liquid bowl.
 He drank while wife and children starved
 And ruined his own soul.

Refrain: And ruined his own soul, etc.

Like other kinds of parlor songs, parlor ballads seem dependent on the premise that song should be ennobling, uplifting, or educational; hence they are invariably grounded in value orientations and worldviews that seem indebted to middle-class aspirations and the idea of polite society. Although lumbermen sang them in bunkhouses and sailors at the forecandle, the “parlor” rather than the “porch” seems to us their natural setting for folk performance, the piano rather than the banjo their appropriate supporting instrument. But in the quotidian contexts of their performance, they were no less real for all that, as meaningful and functional to those who sang them as was an outlaw blues ballad to a Louisiana penitentiary inmate, a murdered-pregnant-sweetheart broadside ballad to an Indiana farmwife, or a Child ballad about lords and ladies astride silver-shod steeds and living richly passionate lives to an Appalachian mountaineer.

Roger deV. Renwick

References

- Coffin, Tristram Potter. 1977. *The British Traditional Ballad in North America*. rev. ed. with a supplement by Roger de V. Renwick. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Ellis, Bill. 1979. “The ‘Blind’ Girl” and the Rhetoric of Sentimental Heroism. *Journal of American Folklore* 91:657–674.
- Laws, G. Malcolm, Jr. 1957. *American Balladry from British Broadside. A Guide for Students and Collectors of Traditional Song*. Bibliographical and Special Series Vol. 8. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society.
- . 1964. *Native American Balladry. A Descriptive Guide and a Bibliographical Syllabus*. rev. ed. Bibliographical and Special Series Vol. 1. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society.
- Wilgus, D.K., and Eleanor R. Long. 1985. The Blues Ballad and the Genesis of Style in Traditional Narrative Song. In *Narrative Folksong: New Directions: Essays in Appreciation of W. Edson Richmond*, ed. Carol L. Edwards and Kathleen E. B. Manley. Boulder, CO: Westview, pp. 437–482.

See also Bronson, Bertrand Harris; Child, Francis James; *Corridos*, Folksong

Baltic Peoples in the United States

Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian Americans. Each is a distinct ethnic group and maintains a unique language and culture. The 1990 U.S. Census reported 812,000 persons of Lithuanian ancestry, 100,000 Latvians, and 27,000 Estonians. The largest Baltic communities may be found in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles, while Toronto is a center of Baltic activities in Canada. For Baltic immigrants, the reasons for leaving the homeland define the kinds of group traditions that will be maintained in America. A brief historical overview of the waves of Baltic immigration, therefore, provides a good introduction to Baltic American folklore today.

Baltic *economic immigrants* began arriving while the territory of today's Baltic republics was still part of the Russian Empire. They arrived in America seeking the opportunities offered by expanding American industry—finding work, for example, in textile mills, furniture factories, and steel mills. The largest numbers of Baltic immigrants came from rural Lithuania, settling in the coal-mining towns of Pennsylvania, the industrial cities of the Northeast, and in Chicago, which is believed to have the largest population of Lithuanians outside Lithuania. Around 1880, Latvian and Estonian immi-



Balys Pakštas plays a Lithuanian clarinet (birbyne); in the right foreground sits a Lithuanian zither (kankles). Chicago, 1977. Photo Jonas Dovydenas. American Folklife Center.

grants also began to establish communities in New York City, Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago.

Having no Social Security system, the immigrants organized social-welfare societies and lodges to provide for themselves in illness and after death. They founded church congregations to continue the mainstream religious customs of their homelands (Lutheran for Estonians and Latvians, Catholic for Lithuanians), singing the songs and reciting the prayers that maintained their faith in the old country. At the turn of the century, *religious persecution* by the Russian government stimulated another, albeit much smaller, wave of emigration, when groups of Estonian and Latvian Baptists left for the religious freedom of America.

After Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became independent in 1918, emigration took place largely for economic reasons, tapering off in the mid-1930s with the end of the economic Depression in Europe. The founding of the three independent states found echoes in Baltic American patriotic societies, which sent aid to their war-torn homelands in the early 1920s, petitioned the U.S. government to give political recognition to the three states, and popularized the culture of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia among the American public—for example, in exhibits at the World's Fair Expositions in Chicago and New York City.

Baltic socialists arrived in the United States both legally and illegally after the failed Revolution of 1905, finding refuge in America from arrest and execution in Russia. Socialist organizations fostered a lively intellectual culture, establishing libraries of books from the homeland, theater troupes, and even schools with instruction in the native language. They maintained the political traditions of their class in the Baltics, actively participating in the American socialist movement. Their ideology conflicted with that of the Baltic American religious and patriotic organizations, and the political divisions within each group sometimes ended in violent confrontations.

World War II caused the massive emigration of Baltic *political refugees*. Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were occupied and annexed in 1940 by the Soviet Union and remained under Soviet rule after the war. Persons living in the Baltics were not allowed to leave the USSR, but several hundred thousand had fled to the West during the war. The refugees were unwilling to return to the Stalinist terror in their homelands, and lived in temporary displaced-persons (DP) camps before they dispersed around the globe from 1948 to 1950. Some 100,000 were allowed to settle in the United States.

The Baltic political refugees organized communities with a mission that was both cultural and political. They had left their homelands, not as emigrants seeking a better life, but as exiles whose goal was the preservation of the Baltic cultures and the continuation of the battle for political independence lost in 1940 (see Carpenter 1988). They purchased churches, community centers, and rural retreats as “miniature homelands” to substitute for their countries imprisoned behind the Iron Curtain, and they established weekend schools, summer camps, Scouts, folk-dance troupes, and other youth activities to pass their language and culture on to American-born generations. National organizations held public demonstrations and lobbied the American government for policies favorable to renewed Baltic independence. It was the conscious maintenance of an identity as political exiles that brought about the blossoming of Baltic ethnic traditions in the United States after the early 1950s.

The most recent wave of Baltic immigrants began with the breakup of the USSR. When the former Soviet borders began opening in the 1980s, the first to emigrate were political dissidents expelled by the government. Later, a new trickle of Baltic economic immigrants began entering the United States. Baltic Americans have recently been moving to the Baltic, too, and cultural and social ties between the American ethnic groups and the three homelands are expanding.

Language has provided the main force of cohesion and survival in the communities and traditions of the Baltic immigrants. The emergence of language loyalty among Lithuanians, for example, caused them to break away from the Polish-speaking congregations they had joined in the 19th century. Most Baltic immigrants followed the pattern of assimilation typical of American immigrants, with the second, American-born, generation not speaking the language of their grandparents. As the language died with the immigrant generation, many folklore traditions were also forgotten.

Archaic folklore that immigrants remember from life in the Baltic countryside has been collected, for example, by Jonas Balys, who in 1949 and 1950 recorded more than one thousand Lithuanian songs, tales, legends, and riddles from prewar immigrants. A blind Latvian immigrant, Janis Plavnieks, told traditional folktales, anecdotes, personal-experience narratives, riddles, puzzles, and songs to his folklorist granddaughter, Inta Gale Carpenter (1980). Much remains to be done, however, in the study of archaic Baltic folklore in the United States. The folksong collections of Balys, Elena Bradunas, and others deserve much further analysis. Much priceless material has been lost with the passing away of Latvian and Estonian immigrants.

Material traditions also survive tenaciously among immigrants. A Lithuanian garden rarely lacks rue (*ruta*, *Ruta graveolens*), a green-leafed plant believed to be the young woman's companion; a sprig of rue is likewise an important part of the Lithuanian bride's dress. Berry plants and trees in the Baltic garden are often traditional favorites, which are not common in mainstream American gardens: Gooseberries, raspberries, red and black currants, apple trees, birches, and lindens, for example, have long been loved by Baltic farmers, poets, and immigrants alike.

Food traditions reflect both urban and rural roots. Meat preserved in aspic (*Es. silt*, *La. galerts*, *Li. drebucai*) was a popular food in both cities and countryside, and older immigrants still enjoy it with horseradish or vinegar. Their grandchildren, however, often dislike the mere idea of eating meat jelly. Both in America and in Latvia, the *klingeris*, a large, pretzel-shaped bread flavored with cardamom, colored with saffron, and decorated with almonds and powdered sugar, has been present at urban Latvian birthday celebrations for several generations. At Christmas, Estonians prepare *verivorst* (blood sausage), recalling the winter holiday traditions of their rural ancestors. Estonians and Latvians alike bake small bacon buns (*Es. pirukas*, *La. pirags*) on special occasions. Lithuanians prepare a rich variety of foods from rural tradition, including *cepinai* (potato dumplings filled with meat) prepared from what Baltic Americans usually agree is the staple food of their nations: the potato.

Folklore also emerged out of the immigrant experience, in the clash and merging of two foreign cultures. Immigrants both follow and transform the old-country tradition of the death announcements printed in native-language newspapers. The name of the departed is printed in bold type, surrounded by a black border. Along with the birth and death dates and names of surviving family members, excerpts from poems, folksongs,

and hymns are included to reveal the individual's personality and traditional attitudes toward death. Many of these memorials refer to the sorrow of life in a foreign country (America) and to dreams of the faraway Baltic homeland.

A similar immigrant tradition is found in American cemeteries having Lithuanian, Latvian, or Estonian sections. Tombstones reveal a personal side of immigrant traditions, expressing religious convictions and attachment to the homeland in epitaphs and ornate traditional carvings. In any Baltic American cemetery, some epitaphs are written in the native tongue, others in English, still others in a mixed language. Whether they reveal a longing for the homeland with phrases from patriotic poems, or a longing for eternity with quotations from church songs and the Bible, the stones cluster together in a declaration of the ethnic identity and community cohesion of their makers.

The merging of individual and ethnic identity appears in other traditions as well. The folk art of a Lithuanian immigrant, Joseph Mender, synthesized many identities and ideologies. Long ago, he learned to make wooden canes from tree branches from his grandfather in Lithuania. The figures and words he carved and painted on these canes, and an enormous collection of miniature pictures he drew, reveal a complex identity based on a composite of memories from childhood in Lithuania, the Catholicism of his relatives, socialist ideology strengthened during work in an American factory, and pre-Christian Lithuanian religion as described in the books he avidly read in his home in upstate New York (Biella and Lux 1990).

Baltic communities consciously maintain customs that foster ethnic unity. The three National Independence Days (Estonia, February 24; Latvia, November 18; Lithuania, February 16) are often considered most important to the communities as a whole and are celebrated at assemblies featuring speeches by both community leaders and local politicians and concerts. Soon after World War II, a day of national mourning was established on June 14 to commemorate the date in 1941 when the Soviet government began the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Baltic citizens to Siberia. In church and at home, Baltic Americans also celebrate Christian holidays (Christmas, Easter, Catholic Mardi Gras for Lithuanians) according to the traditions they have inherited from their homelands. Midsummer night, June 23, is held outdoors according to peasant traditions, with large bonfires, beer, and songs. Latvian non-Christian religious groups called *Dievturi*, and the Lithuanian *Romuva*, revive the pre-Christian customs of the seasonal cycle.

Cultural displays place ethnic traditions in the open, defining to the members of the group as well as outsiders what it means to belong to that group. Unlike the folklore of immigrants, who made traditional foods because they were tasty and easy to prepare, or sang songs to express their emotions, the ethnic groups usually ascribe a meaning of ethnic identity to nearly all forms of Baltic folklore.

What has been called folklorism, the conscious use of folklore as an ethnic or national symbol, has roots in the three Baltic cultures that reach back two centuries. The German philosopher Herder, who praised the beauty of the folksongs of the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian serfs, established national symbolism still maintained by Baltic Americans. They continue the modern singing traditions of the 19th-century Baltic national movements, in which songs collected from oral tradition were arranged for performance by massive choirs on stage. Most dramatic are the national song festivals, at which choirs from across the continent perform together in a single choir of up to a thousand singers.

Baltic American festivals include many other ethnic traditions. Handmade clothes have been meticulously studied and copied from ethnographic publications from the 19th century. Handcrafted jewelry replicates pieces found in archaeological digs in the Baltic. Amber, which has for centuries been washing up from the Baltic Sea onto the western beaches of Lithuania and Latvia, is the favorite stone in necklaces and brooches. Musical instruments derived from Baltic folk tradition, in particular the Estonian *kannel*, Latvian *kokle*, and Lithuanian *kankles* (all variations of a zither-like instrument) are played on stage or displayed in exhibits of folk art. Many Baltic folklore traditions continue in America, in the cultural displays put on at international festivals, as well as in the more personal context of family gatherings such as weddings or funerals.

Guntis Šmidchens

References

- Aun, Karl. 1985. *The Political Refugees: A History of Estonians in Canada*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.
- Balys, Jonas, ed. 1977. *Lietuviu dainos Amerikoje: Lithuanian Folksongs in America*. Second Collection. Silver Spring, MD: Lietuviu Tautosakos Leidykla.
- Biella, Peter, and Karen Lux. 1990. *God's Mother Is the Morning Star: The Life and Art of Joseph Mender*. 30 min. [Philadelphia]: Documentary Film. Videorecording.
- Carpenter, Inta Gale. 1980. *A Latvian Storyteller: The Repertoire of Janis Plavnieks*. New York: Arno Press.
- . 1988. *Being Latvian in Exile: Folklore as Ideology*. Ph.D. diss., Indiana University.
- Kezys, Algimantas, ed. 1977. *A Lithuanian Cemetery: St. Casimir Lithuanian Cemetery in Chicago, III*. Chicago: Lithuanian Photo Library.
- Kundzins, Pauls. 1979. *Latviesu immigrācijas sākumi Albertas province Kanādā un Karla Plavina seta*. N.p.: Gauja.
- Van Reenan, Antanas J. 1992. *Lithuanian Diaspora: Königsberg to Chicago*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Banjo

A plucked-string instrument with a neck, hollow round sound chamber, thin (animal skin or plastic) covering, and bridge. Often considered the emblem of the Southern mountaineer, the banjo actually arrived in this country with Africans in the 18th century, became an integral part of the exchange between Southern Blacks and Whites, and inspired indigenous American music before the mid-19th century.

The banjo brought to the Americas is related to the Wolof *halam* and the Mandingo *bania* still played in 20th-century Africa. Early written records prove that slaves, including Wolofs, either brought the gourd instrument with them from Africa or reconstructed the “banjar” with local materials as early as 1740. Early paintings and drawings clearly identify the short, drone string of the instrument. For almost a century, only African Americans played the banjo; it echoed the traditions of their homeland and paced their songs and dances at community gatherings. A drum-banjo ensemble dominated performances in the Louisiana area, but in the Upland South, an older stronghold of the tradition, individual banjo performances accompanied by clapping or other percussive improvisations persisted tenaciously, especially after the end of the 18th century, when laws curtailed drumming in the East.

In the middle of the 19th century, White Americans became fascinated with the Black banjo tradition. In the Southern mountains, at dances and celebrations far from the popular stage, the African American “short-thumb-string” banjo and the complexly rhythmic “thumping,” or downstroke, playing style took hold. Black banjo players lived on the mountain frontier by 1800, and the ancestors of mountain Whites had earlier contact with Black musical traditions in the Piedmont. Before 1850 and increasingly during the musical exchange of the Civil War, musicians began to set the African banjo, now often adapted to have a smooth wooden neck and a wooden-rimmed open back, ringing with the European fiddle. This interchange was especially energetic among African Americans and Celtic Americans. White interest in the African American gourd banjo resulted in the innovation or popularization of the fiddle-banjo ensemble and later in the old-time string bands finally documented on records in the 1920s and 1930s.

By 1840 White fascination with the banjo had also led to the invention of stage minstrelsy (Whites in blackface devoted to the imitation—often a caricatured parody—of Blacks). Minstrelsy moved from the circus ring to its own stage and became one of the first and most applauded indigenous expressions of popular culture. The development of the fivestring, wooden-rim banjo extended the instrument’s rhythmic range to include greater melodic possibilities and added durability useful to traveling performances. The minstrel tradition later stimulated a flourishing of classical parlor and orchestral styles and of ragtime picking. The 19th-century banjo exchange also shaped the 20th-century innovations of the



Roby Monroe Hicks plays a banjo he has made. Beech Mountain, North Carolina, 1938. Photo Frank Warner. American Folklife Center.

tenor banjo (played with a plectrum in quartets and jazz bands) and the bluegrass banjo, which emerged with its finger-picking styles at the time of the increasing industrialization of the South during World War II. While classical, jazz, and ragtime styles dispersed, the most vital folk styles, downstroking and up-picking, remained strong, close to their roots in the rural South. Two-finger up-picking, acquired from Blacks by minstrels before 1865, also emerged in the rural South. These developments laid the groundwork for the hard-driving, syncopated, bluegrass style popularized by Earl Scruggs and others.

While the old-time five-string folk banjo tradition was still strongly shared by Blacks and Whites during the last half of the 19th century, the complex trading of song material between these musicians gave rise to a distinct genre of American folk music—the banjo song. Although initially and predominantly influenced by African American tastes, the diverse and continuing exchange of these songs came to reflect the influences of both traditions. Old-time African American banjo playing began to decline in the first decade of the 20th century, soon after inexpensive guitars became readily available and at the time that Jim Crow laws became increasingly restrictive for Blacks. Shaped by the banjo-song genre, the songster qualities of the guitar, and industrial encroachment, a growing sense of African American community resistance began to emerge in the blues. But still today, in the performance of both White and Black old-time musicians, the echo of the old African American banjo rings. The instrument itself—the fretless, short-drone-string banjo—its “thumping,” downstroke playing style, its special tunings, and its repertoire of lyric banjo songs persist among both Southern Whites and some Blacks. These same traditions were influential in the folk revival popularized by Pete Seeger, the New Lost City Ramblers, and Southern bands like the Hollow Rock String Band and the Highwoods.

Though other Europeans, some of whom were German, made five-string banjos and contributed to the availability and influence of the instrument in the 19th century, banjo musical exchange seems to have taken place primarily in the rural South between two especially gifted groups: African Americans, including Wolofs, and Celtic Americans, many of whom were Scots-Irish and Irish. The fact that the interchange flourished in the 1840s supports this pattern, for at that time the Irish who emigrated to escape the potato blight began to reinvigorate and diversify the Scots-Irish fiddle tradition and other musical trading. Ireland was one of the early places toured by the first full minstrel band in 1843, and Black banjo pickers still play certain traditional fiddle pieces quite old in Ireland.

The honor of “inventing” the five-string banjo has often rested with Joel Sweeney, a Southern mountain boy of Irish descent who learned to play from Black slaves about 1830 and later became one of the earliest and most influential minstrels. Although Sweeney could have added a fifth string (now called the fourth string) and a wooden rim to the banjo, he definitely popularized these innovations, which served the melodic needs of White performers. He did not, however, add the shortened thumb string (now called the fifth string), which served the musical needs of downstroking (“thumping” or clawhammer) and arrived in the Americas with the ancestors of 20th-century Black musicians like Dink Roberts, John Snipes, and Odell and Joe Thompson.

Some have argued that mountain Whites learned directly from minstrels, but the few reports available tend to identify this early exchange as examples of early minstrels “catching” material from Blacks and White Upland Southerners. The fact that Sweeney himself became a minstrel accounts for considerable folk transmission to the formative players of minstrelsy. That mountain Whites learned directly from Blacks seems apparent from the fact that present-day southern Blacks and Whites share certain special tunings and techniques that are not emphasized and often not even described in the mid-19th-century minstrel banjo instructors. In short, the interest of White mountain musicians and minstrels in African American banjo traditions led to a lively exchange that indelibly

shaped indigenous American folk music and still flourishes as the 20th century draws to a close.

Cecelia Conway

References

- Bailey, Jay. 1972. Historical Origin and Stylistic Developments of the Five-String Banjo. *Journal of American Folklore* 95:58–65.
- Cohen, John, and Mike Seeger, eds. 1964. *New Lost City Ramblers Songbook*. New York: Oak Publications.
- Conway, Cecelia. 1995. *African Banjo Echoes in Appalachia*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.
- Epstein, Dena J. 1977. *Sinful Tunes and Spirituals: Black Folk Music to the Civil War*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Heaton, Cherrill P. 1971. The Five-String Banjo in North Carolina. *Southern Folklore Quarterly* 35:62–82.
- Lornell, Kip. 1974. Pre-Blues Banjo and Fiddle. *Living Blues* 18:25–27.
- Webb, Robert Lloyd. 1984. *Ring the Banjar! The Banjo in America from Folklore to Factory*. Cambridge: MIT Museum.
- Winans, Robert. 1976. The Folk, the Stage, and the FiveString Banjo in the Nineteenth Century. *Journal of American Folklore* 89:407–437.
- See also* Bluegrass; Macon, David Harrison “Uncle Dave”; Minstrel Shows; Seeger, Pete

Barbeau, Marius (1883–1969)

Canada's leading folklorist. Barbeau's contribution to Canadian folklore can hardly be overestimated. *The Dictionary of Literary Biography* (92:13–16, 1990) gives an extensive bibliography and describes his career.

He worked at the National Museum from 1911 until his death, and the Canadian press once summed up his work thus:

He gave the national Museum a collection of 195 Eskimo songs, more than 3,000 Indian, close to 7,000 French-Canadian, and 1,500 old English songs. Many of them are still on the old tube-like records that came off his Edison recorder.... "I would need two lives to process all my research," he once said.

The work he achieved in one lifetime was almost unbelievable. In an age of increasing specialization, he ranged over the whole field of folklore and anthropology, collecting, studying, and describing Indian myths, ceremonials, language, music, arts, and culture; French Canadian folktales, folksongs, art, games, handicrafts, and architecture; and Anglo-Canadian songs and art. His books include two novels reflecting Indian life. A prolific writer, and completely bilingual, he published fifty major books, as many more pamphlets and monographs, and 700 articles in a hundred different periodicals ranging from scientific journals to popular magazines and daily papers. His home was a miniature museum of Indian and French Canadian folk art.

In 1947 Luc Lacourcière wrote, "*Monsieur Barbeau a consacré sa vie et ses études à nos traditions populaires. Grâce à lui, le folklore canadien occupe sa place dans l'étude scientifique des traditions comparées,*" and in 1950 F.J.Alcock, curator of Canada's National Museum, wrote the following:

Dr. Barbeau has been responsible for the development of folklore research in Canada, and the wealth of folklore material in the possession of the national Museum of Canada was largely collected by him and the numerous students to whom he has transmitted his enthusiasm for this type of study

Barbeau was a Fellow of the American Folklore Society, and he served as president and associate editor of the *Journal of American Folklore*, for which he prepared ten special Canadian issues. He founded the Canadian Folk Music Society in 1956 and organized the 1961 International Folk Music Council conference in Quebec.

The list of honors he received would fill a page. They include the Gold Medal of the Royal Society of Canada, honorary degrees from the Universities of Montreal, Laval, and Oxford, and the title of Companion of the Order of Canada, the highest honor Canada bestows.

His major books from the National Museum include *Totem Poles* (1950–1951), *Haida Carvers in Argillite* (1957), *Huron-Wyandot Traditional Narratives* (1960), and three massive volumes of French-Canadian songs: *Le Rossignol y chante* (1962), *En roulant ma boule* (1982), and *Le Roi boit* (1984).

Barbeau was no ivory-tower scholar: He tried to preserve and promote folklore in every way he could. He lectured to many groups, wrote popular books and articles, appeared on radio and television, and made several records. His personal charm comes across in *My Life in Recording Canadian-Indian Folk-Lore* (Folkways Records 3502), in which he sings and beats an Indian drum.

Edith Fowke

Barnicle, Mary Elizabeth (ca. 1898–1979)

Educator and folklorist. Barnicle was an energetic and enthusiastic collector-educator whose work in the area of Appalachian folklife has not been fully appreciated. A Bryn Mawr graduate specializing in medieval English literature, Barnicle taught at New York University from the early 1930s to the late 1940s. While teaching folklore there, she fell under the influence of John Lomax's work and organized a field trip to Georgia, Florida, and the Bahamas to collect folklore in 1935. (These recordings are on deposit at the Library of Congress' Archive of Folk Culture.)

In 1935 she met her husband-to-be, Tillman Cadle, a Kentucky miner and union activist, who had come to New York to visit his friend, Jim Garland, who had suffered a serious mining injury. In 1938 and thereafter, Cadle accompanied Barnicle on a series of recording trips in Kentucky. Her last teaching position was at the University of Tennessee in 1949–1950, but she left there under a cloud, following political problems with a very conservative English Department. Just as she was leaving the university, Barnicle was informed that 200 of her cherished field recordings, which had been on deposit in a campus office, had been misplaced. Deeply hurt by what she and Cadle regarded as the suspicious circumstances of the recordings' disappearance, she lost interest in any further fieldwork.

In 1983, on the shelves of the radio station at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, folklorist Willie Smyth stumbled upon a cache of 150 recordings that had been made by Barnicle between 1938 and 1949 in the Pineville, Kentucky, area. The 1986 LP recording based on this find is an excellent sampling from her field recordings, together with extensive biographical information.

Norm Cohen

References

Smyth, Willie. 1986. *It's just the Same Today: The BarnicleCadle Field Recordings from Eastern Tennessee and Kentucky, 1938–1949*. Tennessee Folklore Society LP TFS 108.

Barrick, Mac E. (1933–1991)

Major collector of regional folklore in central Pennsylvania and analyst of proverbs, beliefs, jokes, and traditional tools. Barrick graduated from Dickinson College in his native Carlisle, Pennsylvania, in 1955; he went on to the University of Illinois for his M.A. and the University of Pennsylvania for his Ph.D. He taught Spanish and folklore at Villanova University, Lycoming College, and Dickinson College, and after 1968 at Shippensburg University. Barrick compiled a major regional archive of folklore from central Pennsylvania, which is housed at the Center for Pennsylvania Gulture Studies at Pennsylvania State University at Harrisburg. He died in 1991.

Barrick's collections of central Pennsylvania folklore began in the 1960s; drawing on these materials, he developed detailed articles on proverbs, riddles, rhymes, legends, tales, anecdotes, autograph verses, language, games, medicine, and beliefs. In these articles, he showed his mastery of textual analysis from both comparative and contextual points of view. With his knowledge of foreign languages, Barrick scoured books from international libraries to annotate his sources. He appropriately wrote the chapter "Folklore and the Verbal Text" for the American Folklore Society's bicentennial publication, *100 Years of American Folklore Studies* (1988). Barrick developed a series of articles on popular joke cycles and regional folk humor, and he offered one of the first inquiries into photocopied and typescript humor as folklore.

Barrick was avidly interested in preindustrial tools and folk crafts within the context of rural economy and community life. He developed this interest with studies of fishing spears (1972), hay knives (1983), corn knives and husking pegs (1970), scrapers (1979), folk toys (1979), and log houses (1986). In central Pennsylvania, much of his collecting was from the Pennsylvania "Dutch," descendants of German settlers who came to Pennsylvania during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. He expanded his knowledge of German American traditions across the country, and his research led to his book *German American Folklore* (1987). He also worked in Spanish folklore, documenting proverb usage in medieval Spain and Portugal and folklore in the work of Miguel de Cervantes and other writers.

Barrick was twice elected president of the Pennsylvania Folklore Society. He served on the editorial board of *Pennsylvania Folklife* and was an original member of the Folklife Advisory Council for the Pennsylvania Heritage Affairs Commission.

Simon J. Bronner

References

- Barrick, Mac E. 1963. Proverbs and Sayings from Cumberland County. *Keystone Folklore Quarterly* 8:139–203.
- . 1985. "Welcome to the Clothes": Changing Proverb Function in the Spanish Renaissance. *Proverbium* 2:1–19.
- . 1994. *Lewis the Robber: A Pennsylvania Folk Hero in Life and Legend*. Terre Haute, IN: Hoosier Folklore Society.

Barry, Phillips (1880–1937)

Most important of the post-Child generation of American ballad scholar-collectors, whose theory of communal re-creation eventually laid to rest the communal theory of ballad origins. Barry based his scholarly writing on both library research and fieldwork and “was the first Anglo-American scholar to investigate traditional song in all its aspects: text, tune, performance, and transmission” (Wilgus 1959:68). Barry brought to his endeavors the unique combination of vast learning, superb academic training, and a comprehensive understanding of musicology. He was a great stimulus to the critical study of the ballad, and his notions of the genre were prescient and far reaching, still exerting their influence on the field.

Educated at Harvard University in the years immediately after Francis James Child, Barry studied folklore, theology, and classical and medieval literature, maintaining a long relationship with his mentors, George Lyman Kittredge, Kuno Franke, and Leo Wiener. This lent him meaningful credibility as a private scholar of independent mind and means, for Barry enjoyed both the respect of the academy and the freedom to devote his time and energies exclusively to scholarship. At the start of his career, the very definition of a ballad was far from settled (the terms “folk-song,” “ballad,” and even “folk music” were used interchangeably). Despite increasingly strident attacks, Francis Barton Gummere’s theory of communal origins held sway. Through extensive fieldwork, exacting documentation, gradual publication, and continual analysis of a growing body of American folksong items, Barry and his peers presided over the sorting out of definition, style, transmission, and other vexing matters left unclear by the great library-centered scholars of the preceding century.

A dedicated collector, Barry followed fieldwork leads from family, friends, and associates, moving beyond these personal networks by placing notices in local newspapers, the *Boston Transcript*, among others. He kept in close contact with other collectors and scholars, contributing both insights and examples to the work of such learned colleagues as H.M. Belden and encouraging hosts of amateur collectors, especially in New England.

Barry’s pursuit of American folk music, beginning in 1903, bore fruit in a steady harvest of folksong texts and melodies, primarily from northern New England and the Maritimes, a region that, until his pioneering work, was thought devoid of migratory ballads. Publishing his results, in such journals as the *Journal of American Folklore*, *American Speech*, and *Modern Language Notes*, initially he was adding Northeast examples to a growing compendium of American folksong texts. His first article, “The Lord Randall Ballad in America” (1903), presents six texts and three melodies of Child 12 and includes a few comments comparing Barry’s collected examples to versions already in print. He was soon working out his ideas, bit by bit, in headnotes to texts and melodies and in a number of ballad histories, making important theoretical advances. His responses and reactions to ideas of other ballad scholars appear throughout his writings, in lively discussions or brief statements like fine tunings, always confidently asserted. Typically, his gracefully written, succinct, and erudite commentaries illumine matters large and small, so that, taken together, they comprise a thorough treatment of his subject.

Working in the era of discovery of American folksongs, Barry ushered in the modern age of ballad studies. Among the more recognized of his accomplishments is his demonstration that songs of the folk, rather than being products of “dancing throngs” composing communally, are instead compositions of “individual invention plus communal re-creation,” a term he introduced in 1907 in an instructive musicological discussion contrasting “traditional” and “composed” airs. He considered the notion to be the very crux of the issue of origins. A song is traditional, he claimed, if it is composed by the folk, first as an individual composition, then communally recreated through the process of transmission. “It should be understood,” he stated at the end of his career, “that *communal re-creation* must include not merely the cumulative effect of accidental and partly conscious change made by many folk singers over a long period of time, but also sudden, marked and perfectly intentional changes by folk singers who are also folk composers, and have...retold an old ballad story in more or less new wording of their own.”

A number of Barry’s other contributions are at least as far reaching, and perhaps of greater significance. Fieldwork with singers stretched his understanding of the genre, and he daringly followed their lead in shaping both his conclusions and his methodology. His was a sophisticated understanding of structural and aesthetic aspects of folksinging. For him, folksongs were the union of text and air (the whole text and the whole melody), completely interdependent. Although Barry’s analysis of texts “actually outweighs his analysis of tunes” (Wilgus 1968), his pioneering discussion of traditional singing style and sets of tunes anticipated the great musicological treatments of folksong melodies published by the subsequent generation of folk-tune scholars. He insisted that other collectors search for tunes and treat them properly. Furthermore, he remained faithful to his early declaration that “to a folk-singer, words and music together make the ballad he sings. The one is not felt to exist without the other.”

As evidence accumulated, Barry saw ballad tradition as a mixture of old and new pieces, all subject to communal recreation. He edged toward including older popular pieces of known authorship into the rubric of folksong, stating boldly that whatever a folksinger sings “from memory” and “for the sheer joy of singing” is traditional. The idea was abhorrent to purists among his contemporaries, but Barry asked, “Why make a distinction when the folk makes none?” The effect of communal re-creation on such songs of commercial origin as “Casey Jones” supports his claim.

Just as prescient was his assertion, ventured in a discussion of Irish folksongs, of the “fact that folk-song is in reality an idea,” of which, by tracing its history, “we can get but the process of actualization.” This is a revolutionary shift in understanding the nature of a ballad. Elsewhere, he clarified his meaning: “No longer is a ballad a static narrative of an event or situation,” but it is a “process...one by which a simple event in human experience of subjective interest, narrated in simple language, set to a simple melody is progressively objectivated.” Barry also challenged the pervasive attitude that folk tradition is the product of illiteracy, pointing out that the printed ballad often stimulated tradition. He went so far as to claim “illiteracy” to be “a negative factor in ballad tradition...inhibit[ing] its survival,” thereby including the ballad printer among the folk engaged in re-creation.

Late in his life, Barry wrote of an “instinct” he had felt when he started collecting, “to go to the folk-singers...[for] evidence in solving the...problems of balladry.” It is entirely

possible that the incidence of a few folksongs in his own family's tradition gave him a glimmer of the process of transmission he later articulated, thus accounting for the intuition that more than thirty years later he reflected upon as "instinct."

Barry was a scrupulous editor who wrote in a style accessible to a general audience, and his mentorship of talented amateur collectors, some of whose work he greatly enhanced by outright collaboration, is also noteworthy. He shared his prodigious learning, introduced the resources of other scholars, provided models for documenting and archiving, and gave editorial guidance. A number of exceedingly well-edited midcentury New England collections of ballads and folksongs bear his stamp.

Barry mentored and collaborated extensively with Fannie Hardy Eckstorm and Mary W. Smyth in Maine and Helen Hartness Flanders in Vermont, among others. Eloise Hubbard Linscott paid him posthumous tribute in her *Folksongs of Old New England*, published in 1939. Of all New England collectors who were his contemporaries, only Edith Sturgis makes no mention of a significant debt of gratitude to Barry, and her *Songs from the Hills of Vermont* was a parochial effort unconnected to any ballad studies network.

A long interest in starting a separate professional American society for folksongs led Barry to found the Folk-Song Society of the Northeast. From 1930 on, he published the greater portion of his collections and commentary under its aegis in the *Bulletin of the Folk-Song Society of the Northeast*, which ceased publication at his death. (There is an annual of broader scope, *Northeast Folklore*, the publishing arm of the Northeast Folklore Society, which, in turn, was founded in the 1960s as a tribute to Phillips Barry by Edward M. Ives at the University of Maine, Orono.)

Linda Morley

References

- Barry, Phillips. [1930–1934] 1960. Ed. and principal contrib. *Bulletin of the Folk-Song Society of the Northeast*. Introduction by Samuel P. Bayard. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society.
- . 1939a. *Folk Music in America*. New York: National Service Bureau.
- . 1939b. *The Maine Woods Songster: Fifty Songs for Singing*. Cambridge, MA : Powell.
- Barry, Phillips, Fannie H. Eckstorm, and Mary W. Smyth, eds. 1929. *British Ballads from Maine*. Critical Notes by Phillips Barry. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Flanders, Helen Hartness, Elizabeth Flanders Ballard, George Brown, and Phillips Barry, eds. 1939. *The New Green Mountain Songster*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Wilgus, D.K. 1959. *Anglo-American Folksong Scholarship since 1898*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Bascom, William R. (1912–1981)

The leading American Africanist of his generation, specializing in art, folkloristics, and the Yoruba people of southeastern Nigeria. An early graduate student of Melville Jean Herskovits, Bascom shared his interest in the comparative study of religion, art, and folklore throughout Africa and its Diaspora. Beginning fieldwork in Nigeria in 1937, he learned the difficult tonal Yoruba language.

After wartime governmental research in Nigeria and Micronesia, Bascom and his Cuban-born wife, Berta, his lifelong coworker, began their studies of the Shango cult, *santeria*, and divination practices of Yoruba origin in Cuba and elsewhere in the New World. *Continuity and Change in Africa Cultures*, which he edited with Herskovits in 1959, is a reference text so popular that it has been reprinted eight times. In 1957 he left Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., to become the founding director of the Lowie (now Phoebe A. Hearst) Museum of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, where his brilliant exhibitions of African art produced several fine catalogs and a popular text. Continuing his interest in Yoruba religion first developed in his dissertation on cult groups, he produced the magisterial *Ifa Divination: Communication between Gods and Men in West Africa* in 1969, which won the Pitre Prize, plus follow-up studies on the Shango cult of the Yoruba god of thunder and lightning as it spread throughout the New World, and a parallel study of the spread of Ifa divination.

Although he described himself as “am anthropologist who does folklore,” Bascom’s contributions were invaluable in a number of papers showing the interplay between myth, narrative, and divination. His two addresses as president of the American Folklore Society, “Four Functions of Folklore” (1954) and “Verbal Art” (1955), along with other major papers displaying his outstanding skill in careful and clear description and analysis in preference to theory, were collected as *Contributions to Folkloristics* just after his death in 1981. He was interested in diffusion theory, as in his major survey article on “Folklore Research in Africa” published in the *Journal of American Folklore* in 1964, as well as in the aesthetics of narration, as shown in *African Dilemma Tales* (1975). Edited by Alan Dundes in 1992, his posthumous *African Folktales in the New World* is Bascom’s final triumphant blast in the decades-long battle with Richard M. Dorson, who held that he had never collected a tale of African origin from his many African American informants, only European, Native American, or Asian tales, and that “Anansi (the popular African trickster) fails to set foot in the United States.” Bascom published numerous tales unquestionably from Africa but told in the Americas, including Anansi stories from the United States. The book also brings up important and embarrassing questions about diffusion and independent invention so long unanswered that contemporary scholars simply eschew them.

Daniel J. Crowley

References

- Bascom, William R. 1944. *The Sociological Role of the Yoruba Cult-Group*. Memoirs of the American Anthropological Association No. 63. Menasha, WI: American Anthropological Association.
- . 1947. *Ponape [now Pohnpei]: A Pacific Economy in Transition*. Vol. 8 of *Economic Survey of Micronesia*. Honolulu: U.S. Commercial Co.
- . 1967. *African Arts: An Exhibition at the Lowie Museum*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- . 1972. *Shango in the New World*. Occasional Publications of the African and Afro-American Research Institute No. 4. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- . 1973. *African Art in Cultural Context*. New York: W.W.Norton.
- . 1980. *Sixteen Cowries: Yoruba Divination from Africa to the New World*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Ottenberg, Simon, ed. 1982. *African Religious Groups and Beliefs; Papers in Honor of William R. Bascom*. Meerut, India: Folklore Institute.

Baseball

A form of “rounders”; America’s national game for nearly 150 years. Baseball is played formally and informally as “hardball,” “softball,” “stickball,” “wiffle ball,” “monkey move-up,” “one old cat,” and in dozens of other forms. Almost all Americans have played some version of it, watched it, and read about it, and most Americans are exposed to its lore and language more often than they realize. Baseball has also sunk deep roots in Japan and Latin America.

Baseball players are from disparate regional and ethnic backgrounds. They come together only for practices, games, and road trips, then go their separate ways. White, Black, Latino, they are literate and subject to the same popular culture that America at large shares. Moreover, they read the people who write about the game, and they talk to the people who broadcast it. Thus, they are not a clear-cut folk group, although they have a certain homogeneity, and an occupa-



“The American National Game of Base Ball”: championship game at the Elysian Fields, Hoboken, New Jersey. Lithograph, Currier & Ives, 1866. Library of Congress.