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"Revelations of Tradition" Symposium

On October 25th, 1997 Dr. Neil V. Rosenberg participated in a symposium at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Entitled "Revelations of Tradition: Harry Smith's *Anthology of American Folk Music* and Its Legacy, the Symposium was co-sponsored by, among others, the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, the Folk Alliance, the American Folklife Center, and the Harry Smith Archives.

Harry Smith (1923-1991) was a man of many talents and interests. He is now recognized as a film maker, painter, ethnographer, anthropologist, record collector, archivist, and occultist. In 1952 he drew from his record collection to create the *Anthology of American Folk Music* for Folkways Records—a set of three boxed albums with two LPs in each box, along with extensive annotations in an 80-page brochure. The recordings were drawn from "hillbilly," "race" and Cajun 78s originally recorded between 1926 and 1932. A

copy of the *Anthology* is in the collection of Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA R229-31da). Like all Folkways records, this collection was kept in print up to 1987, when the company was sold to the Smithsonian.

During the late 1950s and 1960s the collection was a key text in the folksong revival. In 1991 Smith received a special Grammy award for the contribution he made in editing the collection. Robert Cantwell devotes a chapter to its impact in his 1996 book *When We Were Good: The Folk Revival* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press), and Greil Marcus also devotes a chapter to it in his new book *The Invisible Republic: Bob Dylan's Basement Tapes* (New York: Henry Holt).

In August 1997, this collection was reissued by Smithsonian/Folkways in a CD package similar to the original boxed sets; in addition to the original brochure, a new brochure is included with additional annotations and articles by a number of performers, artists, and scholars, including Dr. Rosenberg. The sixth CD in this new package contains, in addition to all of the recordings that appeared on the sixth LP of the set, a CD-ROM package that includes a wide variety of additional materials, including biographical data on Smith, images of his paintings, clips from his films, and so forth.

In addition to Dr. Rosenberg, sixteen other scholars participated in the Symposium, including Millie Rahn (MUN Folklore MA, 1994), Greil Marcus, Robert Cantwell, Allan Jabbour, Joe Wilson, Mike Seeger, Horace Boyer, and Cece Conway.

In conjunction with the Symposium, two evenings of concerts were held at The Barns of Wolf Trap near Washington. These featured performers such as Balfa Toujours, The Fugs, Lonnie Pitchford, John Sebastian, Dave Van Ronk, John Jackson, the New Lost City Ramblers, and Roger McGuinn, all of whom performed songs or tunes originally included in the *Anthology*.

by Dr. Neil Rosenberg, MUN

Transmission

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Abstracts of Papers Presented at AFS 1997 Meeting

John Ashton (Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, MUN). "Rush-Bottomed Chairs and Ivory Towers: S. O. Addy and The Folklore Society." This paper examines the work of one of the most significant but least celebrated of England's early folklorists, S. O. Addy. Addy was among the first genuine fieldworkers in folklore and showed an unusual awareness of the importance of recording contextual detail. His work and sometimes stormy relationship with The Folklore Society illuminate some of the rarely-discussed intellectual conflicts which emerged during the formative years of the English folklore movement.



Harris M. Berger (Texas A&M University) and Giovanna Del Negro (Indiana University). "Bauman's *Verbal Art and the Sociology of Attention: Reflexivity and Aesthetics in Music and Display.*" In Richard Bauman's landmark *Verbal Art as Performance*, reflexivity plays a small but important role; Bauman suggests that signs which indicate the performer's awareness of his/her own presentation may frame the event as a performance or serve other metacommunicative functions. This paper uses the concept of reflexivity to re-examine basic facets of expressive interaction and explore the structure of intersubjectivity in performance. Drawing on Berger's fieldwork on heavy metal and Del Negro's work on the Italian promenade, this paper reveals the crucial role of reflexivity in the aesthetics of performance and seeks a more intimate understanding of experiences of folklore.

Holly J. Everett (MUN). "Virtue Rule Affection: Reading Rings in Contemporary Urban Contexts." For several centuries, people have used rings and the exchange of rings to symbolize the validity and stability of a relationship, an outward symbol of an emotional and physical bond. Historically, the wearing of love rings in Western culture dates back to at least the Middle Ages. The 16th and 17th centuries saw the production of reminder rings, merging elements of traditional religious, mourning, commemorative, and love rings. Signifying commitment, whether in the context of a friendship or romantic relationship, such rings continue to bear testimony to the desire to symbolically identify, present, and ultimately believe in these affective bonds.

Jane Gadsby (MUN). "Cloth Identities: The Presentation of the Self Through T-Shirts." Every day those of us who live in cultures that wear clothes make decisions on what we are going to cover our bodies with. "Clothes cover the anatomy but, at the same time, reveal much about a person's drives and propensities, internal state and external status" (Symes 87). I will be looking at the dual function of T-shirts: the overt messages they project to the people reading them, and their function as self-identifiers and memory makers for the T-shirt wearer.



Goldstein, Diane E. (MUN). "I'm New Here . . . Can Anyone Help?": Contrasting Women's Experiences with Feminist and Medical Models of Menopause." Tied up in our beliefs about aging, life cycle, fertility, nature and social status as well as issues of biological control, gender roles and the power of pharmaceutical companies, menopause has become a manipulated syndrome, rife with agendas that don't necessarily include the cessation of symptoms or improvement of quality of life. This paper will present contrasting notions of menopause based on research done with an Internet menopause support group in 1996 and 1997. Using support group discussion this paper will attempt to construct a typology of issues and concerns shared by the participants which point to an experiential construction of menopause syndrome.

Julia Kelso (MUN). "Home-Purchase and Death: The Influence of Folk Belief on Real Estate Law." Despite the lack of tangible impact, a violent death can have a significant and damaging influence on the sale of a home. Lawsuits have been laid and won by buyers who were uninformed that such an event had occurred in their new home. Death can also significantly reduce resale value or cause a purchase order to be rescinded. This paper will examine how folk-belief regarding death has affected/necessitated the development of certain types of real estate law.

Martin Lovelace (MUN). "Thomas Miller, Oral History, and Regional Writing." Thomas Miller (1807-1874) grew up in the English river port town of Gainsborough. Apprenticed as a basketmaker he left Lincolnshire at 19 and eventually found patronage in the London literary establishment. An energetic Victorian, he wrote some 40 books, several on rural life. At 50 he published *Our Old Town* (1857), a book of his memories of everyday life in

Gainsborough. He adopts, perhaps invents, the term "oral history" and develops a new style that eschews pastoral generalities and looks directly at specific people, places, and behavior. Miller's writing prefigures modern oral history and regional ethnology.

Bruce Mason (MUN). "Cyberphilia, Or Do Netheads Dream of Electric Sheep?" The Internet provides a challenge to anyone working in the fields of folklore and ethnology. In this presentation I essay a cultural history of the development of the Internet from its early days as a U.S. Defense Department project to its current sprawling chaos. I focus on the subversion of the technology by its users and highlight the manner in which the ideology of the pioneers has been naturalized as the Internet norm known as "netiquette." This diachronic analysis is useful in examining the seemingly disconnected sets of attitudes that appear to govern the workings of the Internet.

Lara Maynard (MUN). "A Legend in His Own Space: Material Culture and Narrative in the Archaeology of a Headstone Seller and Genealogy Practitioner." Expanding on Barbara Kirschenblatt-Gimblett's "Objects of Memory: Material Culture as Life Review" (1989), this case study calls attention to material objects as correlative of genealogical memory. It considers how the informant's genealogical past is pervasively present, as he surrounds himself with objects that act like supercharged mnemonic devices that are capable not only of recovering or indexing biography, but of collectively and selectively communicating genealogy. The hypothesis of Stephen Sayers's article "The Psychological Significance of Genealogy" (1987) that genealogy affords its practitioners a degree of psychological gratification and his observations on the legendary characteristics of genealogy are supported by this study.

Gerald L. Pocius (MUN). "Mimicry, Heritage and Non-Tradition: The Cabot 500 Celebration in Newfoundland." Little is known about the voyage of John Cabot aboard the *Matthew* to Newfoundland in 1497, but a year-long commemoration--the Cabot

500 Celebration--marks 1997. With little surviving evidence, this celebration has focused on the building of a *Matthew* replica and a mimicry of the original Cabot voyage with a summer "*Matthew* Visit" to Newfoundland. The *Matthew* has also been fabricated in chocolate, in hair; it was equated not with tradition but with heritage and, thus, became the key symbol of the 1997 celebration.

Neil V. Rosenberg (MUN). "The Springhill Mine Disaster Songs and Canadian National Memory." Eleven songs, mainly from commercial recordings, about two Nova Scotia mining disasters of the 1950s are examined. News media's role is discussed; composers, described. Each song is analyzed in terms of composer's experience and intentions, possible models, ideas and values expressed, and presentation of events and feelings of time. Three songs persist beyond their original performances because of wide dissemination and factors pertaining to content. Today the non-Canadian song is the only one regularly heard by Canadians as a memorial, a reflection of national issues including regionalism, class, external cultural models, and economic policy.

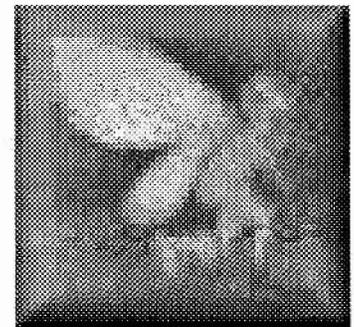
Paul Smith (MUN). "Joseph Mather: Ballad Monger." Studies of broadside ballad traditions have primarily focused on broadsides containing what have been defined as a priori "traditional" material. Little consideration has been given to the writers/performers and the part they played in the creation of new materials that could subsequently become incorporated into the oral tradition. Born in 1937, Joseph Mather, a filesmith in Sheffield, England, was one such writer/performer. This paper explores the man, the milieu in which he operated, and his songs, including one written in the latter part of the 18th century, subsequently recorded in the oral tradition in Sheffield in 1969.

Chris Anne Stumpf (MUN) and Rachel Gholson (MUN). "A Cold Blooded Business or Playing with Fire? Culture, Folklore, and Memory: The Convergent Path to Understanding Tradition in Dana Stabenow's Detective Fiction." Considering the Shugak detective novels written by Dana Stabenow, a clear progression presents itself in relation to

the main character. The influence that tradition, memory, and folklore have upon Shugak's struggle to create a personal schema will be the focus of this paper as they influence Shugak and move her toward negotiating her role in multicultural society. Throughout the novels, Shugak creates a persona which intertwines elements of Aleut and Anglo worldview. As her process of self-acceptance unfolds, we see the creation of a schema. This schema reveals that humanity has the postmodern ability to create order out of modern angst. Thus, the emphasis on the power of tradition, folklore, and memory in the constructing of culture is of ultimate import.

Wendy Welch (MUN). "Pouring Out Their Hearts: A Study of Women and Coffee." Women use coffee to manipulate their surroundings and take control of their environment in four ways. They rely on its caffeine to keep them stimulated when they are tired; they begin drinking it at the threshold of adulthood to assert their new status; they make dates for coffee with groups of friends or one member of the opposite sex, making geographic and temporal space for social conversation; and they barricade themselves into a private sphere with other women using a coffee pot and cups, creating an atmosphere in which to commune.

- compiled by Lara Maynard, MUN



Folkloric Fiction Reviews

I don't seem to have read a lot of very recent fiction lately, probably because my graduate student budget usually limits me to the used bookstores. This time I have reviewed a "Young Adult" fantasy, a historical fantasy, a mystery, and two

fantasy anthologies. If you have any comments or suggestions, you can write to me *c/o Transmission*, or e-mail me at s64ns@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.

***The Hunter's Moon* by O.R. Melling.** Toronto: Harper Collins, 1993 (paperback 1994).

It is becoming better known among readers of fantasy fiction that many wonderful books can be found in the "Young Adults" section of the bookstore. *The Hunter's Moon* is one of these books. It is a story about two teenage girls and their contact with the land of Faery. Gwen is Canadian and is visiting her Irish cousin Findabhair when the two decide to spend the night in a sidhe mound. Findabhair disappears, and Gwen must find her. The novel is full of odd bits of faery lore, including a fairy doctor (someone wise in the ways of faery, who can cure faery diseases). It is a story about fitting in, being true to yourself, and following your dreams. While the two girls romanticize the faery world, the novel does not shy away from the not-so-nice aspects of interacting with the Good People. Besides being a good novel to recommend to any young people you may know who are interested in folklore, it is also a good read for an adult audience, although some of the allusions will mean more to a younger reader. It is a fun novel, and has a much less cheesy ending than I had feared.

***Heaven Sent.* Edited by Peter Crowther.** New York: DAW, 1995.

There are an awful lot of themed fantasy anthologies around, both in and out of print. This one seems to be trying to capitalize on the recent and enormous popularity of angels, but for those who like short stories, it isn't a bad read. As with most anthologies of this kind, the stories are mostly middle of the road, with a few very good, and a few not so good. I must admit, I wouldn't have bought this book if it didn't have a story by Charles deLint in it. The deLint story, "The Big Sky," was as wonderful as I had hoped (he hasn't disappointed me yet). "Spirit Guides" by Kristine Kathryn Rusch (former editor of *The Magazine of Fantasy and Science Fiction*), and "Steam" by Ian McDonald were also among the very good stories. There were a few humorous stories, such

as "Cherub" by Garry Kilworth, and some horrific, like "Real Messengers" by John Brunner. As for the rest of the stories, none of them were particularly bad, but most weren't particularly memorable either. I would recommend this anthology for readers who read little other than short stories, but for those looking for an outstanding anthology, have a look at the Datlow and Windling volume, reviewed below.

***Druids* by Morgan Llywelyn.** New York: Ivy, 1991.

Morgan Llywelyn is well known for her highly readable novelizations of Celtic, especially Irish, historic and mythological events. This particular novel does not take place in Ireland, but in Northern Gaul at the time of Roman expansion into that area. It is the story of Vercingetorix, a prince of the Arverni, who dreams of uniting the Gaulish Celts against Rome. The story is told from the point of view of Ainvar, a Druid and friend and advisor to Vercingetorix. Llywelyn has done her homework as usual, and creates a believable and accurate picture of Celtic life. Although very little is actually known about the Druids and Celtic religion, Llywelyn interprets what is known and expands it in reasonable and interesting ways. Although this is primarily a historical novel, there are enough fantastic elements to satisfy fantasy fans without overwhelming people who prefer to avoid the genre. There are a lot of tidbits of interest to folklorists mixed in as well. It is interesting to see how the lore is used, and how it blends in seamlessly with the other elements of the novel. I highly recommend any and all of Morgan Lywelyn's novels—for those of you who are interested, some of the others are *Lion of Ireland*, *Isles of the Blessed*, *The Horse Goddess*, *The Red Branch*, *Grania* and *Bard*.

***Book of Moons* by Rosemary Edghill.** New York: Tor, 1995.

Book of Moons is actually the sequel to another novel, *Speak Daggers to Her*, but since I read the sequel and not the original I can say that it is not necessary to read the one to enjoy the other. It is a mystery novel and, while not specifically drawing on folklore, it will be of interest to some folklorists as it depicts a "folk group" within mainstream society: the neo-pagan

community (more specifically, the wiccan community). The story revolves around the odd thefts of several people's "Books of Shadows" (a sort of journal or recipe book in which wiccans and other pagans record rituals, spells and other useful tidbits of information). As well as following a well-written mystery the reader of this novel gets to see the neo-pagan community of New York through the eyes of a member. For pagan readers, it is a chance to see how a pagan community in another part of the world works, and for non-pagan readers it provides a fairly balanced view of this religious group. While I would not recommend this novel as a good example to someone specifically looking for uses of folklore in literature, I would recommend it to almost everyone else. Even if you are not a fan of mystery novels, you might find this book enjoyable.

***Black Swan, White Raven.* Edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling.** New York: Avon, 1997.

This is the fourth volume of the Fairy Tale anthology series edited by Datlow and Windling (see earlier issues of *Transmission* for reviews of some of the others). This editorial team is also responsible for the award-winning *Year's Best Fantasy and Horror* anthologies. Outside of these two series of anthologies, Ellen Datlow is best known for her editorial work in the horror genre, and has been fiction editor of *Omni*. Windling is known for her work in the fantasy genre, editing both anthologies and novels. More recently, her novel *The Wood Wife* has met with favorable reviews (see last issue of *Transmission* for my review). Like every other Datlow and Windling anthology I have read, this one is excellent. All of the stories are reworkings of familiar fairy tales and other oral genres, but those familiar stories are used in many different and often surprising ways. It is difficult to pick out any one story, or even a few stories, to use as examples, as all of them are excellent. Some are written as "traditional" fantasy stories, and some differ little from their first published forms, while in other stories it is difficult to pick out the original tale. As would be expected from this combination of a

fantasy and a horror editor, some of the stories are fantastic, and some are horrific, while many are both. There isn't any really gory horror here, however. Most of it is more along the lines of so-called dark fantasy. Perhaps I have gushed a little too much over this book, but I really can't recommend it enough.

by Niko Silvester



Book Reviews

Creating the Modern South: Millhands and Managers in Dalton, Georgia, 1884-1984. By Douglas Flamming. (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1992. Pp. XIII + 433. Table of contents, table of illustrations, table of tables, illustrations and maps, acknowledgments, introduction, black and white photographs, appendices, notes, bibliography, index. Paperback.)

Researching a hundred years of labour history and discussing it in a single text is a daunting and arduous task which Douglas Flamming successfully accomplishes. For some, the thought of reading 400-plus pages of labour history may be as daunting as the writing of the work, but when considering Flamming's intentions behind completing the book—"[to] breathe life into a richly textured past"—it is conceivable how such an interesting and at times captivating recreation of a culture's history is achieved (345).

The book, as the title suggests, is an historical investigation of the textiles industry in Dalton, Georgia between 1884 and 1994. More specifically, the work examines a specific corporation's—Crown Cotton Mill of Georgia—development over the hundred year period in relation to other regional and national labour contexts in the United States at the time. While Flamming succeeds at many levels, his

work is most appealing because it is an *investigation* in the truest sense of the word. The work unfolds as a jigsaw puzzle that has been meticulously constructed through research methods that are not only alluded to in the main body of the text, but thoroughly explicated for fourteen pages in "Appendix B. Quantitative Analyses: Data and Methods" (345-358). He states that he followed a method of research called "quantification" which he defines as "the art of using that data to re-create an accurate and detailed portrait of a community" (345). As a result, the reader experiences the historical process as an exciting journey through time, where what is assumed is not necessarily the case.

Throughout the book there are sentences that begin with phrases such as "Historians have underestimated . . ." (98), "Labour historians often argue . . ." (140), and "Many myths have surrounded the first generation of cotton-mill workers" (30). Without abandoning previous views on the subject, Flamming counters with his own information which ultimately alters the narrative flow that had been manufactured through previous historical models. The strength of Flamming's arguments stem from his ability to know the people he is studying, or as he says, "to learn as much as possible about the individuals within their community" (345). He draws from a plethora of cultural behaviours to acquaint himself with the period, i.e., vernacular architecture (266), local legend (194), leisure activities (162), and vernacular religion and institutions (156-157), and applies this knowledge to what was already formulated about the region's history. By utilizing primary documents such as oral interviews, newspaper articles and census schedules, the reader is persuaded by what are simple, convincing arguments. Moreover, the discrepancies Flamming introduces are instrumental for elucidating many of the motivations and consequences of corporate behaviour that had generally gone unchallenged because of the often superficial understandings of the events.

The ultimate success of this book lies in the manner Flamming has chosen to write the material down. His decision to

juxtapose the historical perspectives of the millhands against the historical perspectives on the managers of the Crown Corporation creates the illusion that his research is done in a purely objective and neutral fashion. Not wanting to have his research resound in bias, he equally represents the issues of both management and the workers, who clearly shared (at least) two disparate views of their situations in the labour process. With these two different views in place, he provides his own analysis of the relationships between management and workers. It is here that Flamming's labour support is evidenced, obviously influencing his final conclusions. But again, his support for labour does not detract from his research as a whole: he does not overly romanticize working class culture, but rather, illustrates how one empowered group responded first and foremost to its own needs to guarantee its economic well being.

I will focus on one specific example to illustrate Flamming's clever presentation of a crucial event in Crown's history. The event is Crown's decision to sell its corporate housing to the millhands who were previously renting the buildings. The decision to sell proved positive for both parties, but what Flamming deconstructs is the philanthropic image of Crown fulfilling the needs and wants of its workers. At the time of the sale in 1953, the new head of Crown, David Hamilton, was quoted to say, "I really had a gut feeling that the people would be better off as homeowners than renters" (268). After Flamming had previously acknowledged Hamilton's declarations of humanizing the workplace, and began treating the workers with the respect they deserve, the decision to sell the houses to the millhands because of Hamilton's "gut feeling" almost seems possible. True to form however, Flamming subverts Hamilton's sentiments with more "practical reasons" for selling the houses (268). Quite simply, the company was no longer making money from the rental fees, and the additional overhead expenses were proving to be a liability:

Company housing no longer paid. Given that mill-village rents had not been raised in over half a century and the ever-aging dwellings were in

constant need of repair, "the expense of the thing got to be a pretty major problem." (269)

The philanthropic facade is completely undermined; but only after Flamming has given David Hamilton the benefit of the doubt by making sure that Hamilton's voice has not been left out of the events. Flamming exposes the situation for what it was: a corporation responding to their economic situation. What becomes increasingly apparent as the book unfolds is that these economic situations dictate all decision-making at the Crown Corporation, and ultimately damages the lives of those employed by the company.

If there is any criticism of this work, it would be that Flamming's attempt to maintain a neutral voice can at times confuse his audience. While these instances are brief and infrequent, there were times when I was confused at what was actually being said. For example, in one paragraph he states that the "Share Work plan" was built on good intentions, but he concludes the paragraph by saying that so

long as workers were being selectively laid off or integrated into different departments as part-time hands, any millhands at odds with the company's supervisory personnel were vulnerable to discrimination in the name of benevolence and expediency. (192)

While these examples of apparent contradiction are seldom, it at times proved frustrating for those wishing for a more aggressive style of discourse to be utilized when discussing these situations of corporate manipulation and abuses of power.

In conclusion, Douglas Flamming should be commended for this fine work. The book is well written and contains several useful, easy to follow charts, maps and photographs. I was impressed with its detail and thoroughness, especially considering the depth of the time period covered. The book will prove to be an excellent source for both scholars and students of many disciplines i.e., history, folklore, sociology and cultural anthropology.

By Michael Robidoux, MUN

More Man Than You'll Ever Be: Gay Folklore and Acculturation in Middle America. By Joseph P Goodwin. (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1989. Pp. xv + 122. Acknowledgements, annotated bibliography, index. Paperback.)

Goodwin's work was important when it first arrived on the scene in 1989 and continues to be important today. Several aspects of the book may date it, however. Although *More Man Than You'll Ever Be* was released in 1989, most of the research took place in 1981 and 1982. This alone likely accounts for the fact that AIDS, now one of the defining factors in the gay subculture's dynamic relationship with straight culture, is afforded a minuscule nine page chapter ("O Brave New World").

The purpose of Goodwin's work is straight forward: in the ever expanding world of folklore research gay folklore is an important and viable field of study. "The unexplored richness of the folklore of the gay subculture cannot be denied; nor should it be over looked any longer" (xv). As such, Goodwin attempts to understand gay folklore in terms of acculturation, communication and identification in gay subculture and uses a generally functionalist paradigm to analyze cohesion and conflict resolution in this culture.

Goodwin is most interested in defining the process of acculturation as it applies to the movement from a dominant culture (heterosexual) to a subculture, the subculture being at the same time reliant on the hegemonic culture for much of its definition. Using a static, linear five step process where a person moves from identifying him- or herself as gay through to serving as a model for others moving through the process, Goodwin looks at how folklore is a necessary tool of communication. Gay culture's reliance on folklore is fundamentally a function of its subculture status which formed a "private system of communication" (3-4). Goodwin is most interested in looking at the argot of gay culture and the joke as the two main folkloric features of this private communicative mode. In order to understand other aspects of gay culture he also discusses proxemics, drag and camp.

To understand gay culture in general he dogmatically adopts the structural-

functionalist analysis of Radcliff-Brown. Under this model all expression tends towards group cohesion; conflicts that threaten the group are contained and expressed in a mode that releases tension and therefore retains group cohesion. This model sees the joke as either an expression of solidarity and strength or, because of the joke's ambiguity, license and the rules of joking, as a safe way to express conflict. Goodwin's use of functionalism exposes much of the complexity of jokes, their function and their ambiguity, however, as a static model which actively explains away all modes of conflict under a rubric of "safe" communicative modes, his analysis highlights continuity of tradition at the expense of explaining change.

Despite this tendency *More Man Than You'll Ever Be* is a perceptive look at the way gays have manipulated language (the creation of a gay argot) and used joking to create a cohesive cultural group. At its most basic level the book is a great collection of gay humour and provides an emic understanding of argot/slang.

Two gay men are sitting on the bank of the Ohio River down near Cincinnati, and this big ship comes by, loaded with cars and trucks. One of the guys says, "What's that?"

And the other one says, "That's a ferry boat."

The first one says, "Well I *knew* we were organized, but I *damn sure* didn't know we had a navy!" (37)

The book's strength, beyond this, is Goodwin's ability to draw out the subtle nuances of a joke or tale. This ability is no small feat since many jokes rely upon wordplay and clever linguistic tricks to both expose and conceal the meaning and intentions of a joke. Goodwin is especially strong in demonstrating the kind of joking and tales that reflect and distort gay culture: "Gays intentionally distort their culture *and* straight culture, showing straight people what they expect to see, insulting them without their awareness" (62).

Less satisfying is his attempt to understand both drag and camp. He argues convincingly that previous definitions of camp are empty lists masquerading as definitions or are

flawed in their reliance on effeminacy as a base. Goodwin, for his part, offers his own definition:

Camp is an attitude, a style of humour, an approach to situations, people, and things. The camp point of view is assertively expressed through exaggeration and inversion stressing form over content, deflating pomposity, mocking pretension, and subverting values. Camp is the manifestation of a 'tension between [a] person or thing and [its] context or association.' Sometimes (but certainly not always) camp behaviour is effeminate. Like much gay humour, camp plays with stereotypes, carrying them to extremes, flouting heterosexual values. Camp shows the world 'as it could be,' while saying 'My God, what if it were that way?' Camp is a metacultural statement, an aspect of culture commenting on culture. Camp can be solely playful, but often it is a serious medium, providing a weapon against oppression. (39)

A brave act and one which would have been more satisfying if we were provided with more examples and analysis. For example, he offers Tallulah Bankhead as a camp figure but, rather than clarify the idea of camp, the casual inclusion of a body of tales around a complex figure only adds to the confusion surrounding the idea of camp and also limits our understanding of what Tallulah Bankhead means to gay culture.

The discussion of drag is more coherent but it presents the reader with several contradictory perspectives on the practice in gay culture. On the one hand Goodwin presents drag as an expression that lies at the heart of gay folklore: an aggressive assault on stereotypes. He also presents a practice which is the site of conflict in the gay community because it is seen as reinforcing damaging stereotypical behaviour. Alongside these two poles are offered the drag queen as trickster figure and narrative hero. Goodwin's own understanding of the dynamic of drag is a transparent attempt to stuff a complex (which he has already demonstrated) mode of expression into his paradigm of subculture acculturation. In order to do this he partially defines

drag as an adoption by the person of an etic understanding (a stereotypical understanding) of gay culture which is presented by heterosexual culture: "Thus these men have adopted an etic outsider's identification rather than an emic or insider's one in an attempt to accelerate the process of acculturation" (76).

With the capitalization in the late 1980's and 1990's on gay chic, camp, drag, etc. by the likes of Madonna, the fashion industry (à la RuPaul), popular film (*Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything, Julie Numa*, and the recent piracy of French cinema, *The Bird Cage*) and advertisers in general, the profile of gay cultural expression has certainly increased. Because of this the impact of Goodwin's book may be lost on us. What cannot be ignored, however, is the achievement that, while attempting to portray an entire subculture, he does not lose the individual informant, his goals, fears and humour. Goodwin's inclusion of personal experience narratives is especially strong and unlike the anonymous jokes, allows the reader to see the combination of performance and individuality. Also provided is a brief annotated bibliography that is an important aid to other scholars since we lack an independently published annotated bibliography of gay research. In the end this book is a necessary and important text for folklorists since it provides the first insider analysis of gay folklore and culture. It redresses many of the imbalances of earlier works, (Norien Dresser's *The Boys in the Band Is Not Another Musical* and Roy D. Smith's *An Explanatory Consideration of Homosexual Folklore* are two examples) and points out new directions for study.

John Bodner, *MUN*



Grammy Nomination for Folklore Prof

He doesn't have the attitude of Puff Daddy, or the flamboyance of David Bowie, but Dr. Neil Rosenberg, Folklore, does have something in common with both these rather more famous names. All three appear on this year's list of Grammy nominees.

But before you start spreading the word that bands in which Dr. Rosenberg plays, Crooked Stovepipe and the Black Auks, have finally joined the really big leagues of the music industry, you should know that his nomination comes not as a result of his acknowledged performance prowess, but because of his research and writing skills.

His nomination (shared with eight others) is in the "Best Album Notes" category, and relates to his co-authoring of the notes for the *Anthology of American Folk Music*, re-issued last year by Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings. Dr. Rosenberg explained that in some ways the six-CD set is a re-issue of a re-issue.

The original anthology was comprised of six (vinyl) albums, and released in 1952. Those albums included folk tracks from the period 1926-1931, originally recorded on 78s.

The album notes for which the nomination has been garnered include the original 1952 notes plus extra insights made possible by the additional time that has passed.

Dr. Rosenberg's section for example, is "about how the whole thing fit into the development of folk music." People like Jerry Garcia and Bob Dylan are quoted, speaking about the influence of the original set on them and their musical careers.

And yes, on Feb. 25 Memorial's own Neil Rosenberg will be in New York for the Grammy Awards.

"Well, the presentation for this category isn't one of those included in the television portion of the show," he admitted, "but the winners are flashed up on the screen during the second half of the Grammys. If you blink, you'll miss it, but who knows? I could be up there."

Jean Graham, the Gazette, *MUN*

Editor's Note: Congratulations to Dr. Neil Rosenberg and his co-authors for winning the Grammy for "Best Album Notes." The *Anthology of American Music* also won a Grammy for "Best Historical Album."



Rabbit's Ph.D. Thesis: A Parable for Graduate Students

Scene:

It's a fine sunny day in the forest, and a rabbit is sitting outside his burrow, tippy-tapping on his typewriter. Along comes a fox, out for a walk.

Fox: "What are you working on?"

Rabbit: "My thesis."

Fox: "Hmmm. What's it about?"

Rabbit: "Oh, I'm writing about how rabbits eat foxes." (incredulous pause)

Fox: "That's ridiculous! Any fool knows that rabbits don't eat foxes."

Rabbit: "Sure they do, and I can prove it. Come with me." They both disappear into the rabbit's burrow. After a few minutes, the rabbit returns, alone, to his typewriter and resumes typing. Soon, a wolf comes along and stops to watch the hardworking rabbit.

Wolf: "What's that you're writing?"

Rabbit: "I'm doing a thesis on how rabbits eat wolves." (loud guffaws)

Wolf: "You don't expect to get such rubbish published, do you?"

Rabbit: "No problem. Do you want to see why?" The rabbit and the wolf go into the burrow, and again the rabbit returns by himself, after a few minutes, and goes back to typing.

Behind the Scene:

Inside the rabbit's burrow. In one corner, there is a pile of fox bones. In another corner, a pile of wolf bones. On the other side of the room, a huge lion is belching and picking his teeth.

And The Moral of the Story Is:

It doesn't matter what you choose for a thesis subject. It doesn't matter what you use for data. What does matter is who you have for a thesis advisor.

(Found on the internet. Author unknown)



Call for Papers

Resources for Feminist Research: Papers are invited for a special issue of *Resources for Feminist Research* addressing feminist practice in qualitative research. This issue aims to be interdisciplinary in scope and international in context. Articles should offer a reflexive critique of planning, collecting, and interpretation phases of the research process. We encourage submissions that explore ethical approaches to feminist research and discuss participant observation, interview, and ethnographic models of research from a variety of disciplinary standpoints. Authors wishing to contribute should forward an abstract of the proposed paper to the editors by March 15, 1998. Deadline for submission of finished papers is August 1, 1998. Contact: Dr. Diane Tye, Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NF, A1B 3X8; e-mail dtye@morgan.ucs.mun.ca; or Linda Cullen, Department of Sociology, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NF, A1C 5S7; e-mail lcullen@morgan.ucs.mun.ca.



Notables

Eileen Condon has been awarded the Women's Association of Memorial University of Newfoundland Graduate Student Scholarship.

Lizanne Henderson has been named a Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies, Memorial University.

Lara Maynard has been awarded the F.A. Aldrich Graduate Award, the David Buchan Graduate Research Award in Folklore, the Luc Lacourcière Memorial Scholarship, and an Honorable Mention in the David Buchan Student Essay Prize for Contemporary Legend Research competition.

J. David Neal has been named a Fellow of the School of Graduate Studies,

Memorial University.

Contessa Small has received a research grant from the Institute of Social and Economic Research for work on her MA thesis.

Wendy Welch has been awarded the Sue Samuelson Foodways Award and the Royal Bank/MUN Traveling Scholarship.



Call for Help

I am doing preliminary research into scar practices of youth (as a subculture) in North America. I would be interested in hearing from anyone who has participated in such activities or anyone who can provide suggestions for my research. I am currently collecting and tracing the "friendship scar" tradition in Newfoundland as well as the rise of commercial scarification procedures in urban centers. Email me at:

h63jmb@morgan.ucs.mun.ca

Or write to me: John Bodner, 64 Mullock St., St. John's, NF, A1C 2R8



The fairy art in this issue was created by Niko Silvester, MUN.



The next issue of *Transmission* is due in May 1998. Submissions for the next issue should be sent in by April 25, 1998.



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Check out our WWW Home Page on
<http://www.ucs.mun.ca/~culture>

