

TRANSMISSION

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What is Culture & Tradition?

Culture & Tradition is Canada's longest running bilingual folklore journal. Publishing for more than twenty years in both French and English, *Culture & Tradition* is currently run by graduate students in Folklore at Memorial University.

Culture & Tradition (C&T) accepts articles in French and English in subject matters of cross-disciplinary interest, employing either ethnological or folkloric methodology. This may include ethnology, anthropology, cultural studies, oral history, women's studies, popular culture, museum studies, applied folklore, and the like.

Published articles have addressed topics in the traditional arts, music, foodways, architecture, beliefs, cultural psychology, occupational folklore, and the social structure of regional, ethnic and religious folklore in Canada. Studies focusing on topics of import to Canada, based on research conducted at home or abroad, are accepted. Studies based in Eastern Canada are encouraged.

The journal encourages submission of book and multi-media (CD-ROM, music, film, website) reviews. If you have questions regarding the applicability of the subject matter for review, please contact the Book or Multi-media Review Editors at culture@mun.ca.

An index of past journal articles and other information about C&T, including current subscription rates can be found on our webpage at www.uccs.mun.ca/~culture.

Vol. 26, a special issue on "Student Life and Campus Customs" is available for purchase for \$15. Contact culture@mun.ca.

Vol. 27 is currently in production under the editorial direction of Andrea Kitta. C&T is always looking for students to get involved. Join us at the first meeting of the school year to find out what role you can play in the production of *Culture & Tradition*.

**Pre-Order Volume 27 of *Culture & Tradition*. Only \$15 for students!
See what graduate students are writing about!**

Name: _____
Address: _____

Fill in this form and mail with your cheque to:

Culture & Tradition
Memorial University of Newfoundland
Box 21, Hickman Bldg
St. John's, NL

Did you hear about Professor So-and-So?

Jan Tulk

I remember my days as an undergraduate student in the School of Music here at Memorial University. After falling in love with ethnomusicology and deciding to ditch the music education degree program for a major in music history and literature, I started enrolling in as many music history or ethnomusicology courses as possible. Oh, the buzz in the building when Jazz and Blues was offered by Dr. Peter Narvaez! Several of my music school friends were anxious to enroll, and enroll we did.

And we thoroughly enjoyed the course – the music was fantastic! But I remember the fear and trepidation as the mid-term exam approached. We'd all heard about Peter's tests. We all *knew* what we were in for. It was true, it *had* to be true. After all, I heard it from a friend, who heard it from one of her friends, who said it happened. So we all knew what we were in for. Oh yes. That infamous exam question: "In such-and-such film, what was so-and-so's hat made of?" Yes, we'd heard that Peter expected us to pay great attention to detail while watching films. Now, we didn't know which film the question would be about and we certainly didn't know which person the question would be asked about, but the question would be there, because it had been in the past. And it came from a friend of a friend, so it had to be true.

Perhaps the film would be *A Great Day in Harlem*. Maybe the person in the hat would be Jimmy Rushing or Buck Clayton or Roy Eldridge? No! Thelonius Monk. Definitely Thelonius Monk! Yes, the question would be: "In the film *A Great Day in Harlem*, what was Thelonius Monk's hat made of?" Yes, that must be it.

Well, in fact, I don't recall whether I was ever asked such a question about any person or film. And I don't have the mid-term exam to verify the fact either way. But if it wasn't a question on my mid-term, it had been on mid-terms in the past. After all, I did hear from a friend who heard from a friend, so it *must* be true!

Years later, when in a situation where peers were discussing the crazy and unexpected questions that professors would put on exams, I would always pull this story out of my repertoire. It was always a hit. And, of course, I took a little artistic license in the performance. Yes, I told them that it had indeed been a question on an exam that I had written, and I, of course, had no idea what the bloody hat was made out of! Why would I care what Thelonius Monk's hat was made of on that *Great Day in Harlem*? Who asks that sort of question anyway? And I enjoyed the shocked expressions on the faces of my audience and their reassuring comments that professors do these things and it really is ridiculous behaviour for an academic.

A few years have passed since I last performed that rumour as a personal experience narrative and I myself have begun teaching. The story of Peter's infamous exam question disappeared in the recesses of my memory sometime after taking the genre course and learning about contemporary legends and rumour and the sort. But came back with a vengeance, so to speak, in May.

Sitting at Sun Sushi with a friend one sunny afternoon, two of my former students from Music 3005: Development of Opera arrived and sat at a table close to me. We exchanged pleasant salutations and returned to our

respective conversations. Then one of my students approached my table and we chatted a little about the course, graduation recitals, and the like. I suppose he was feeling more comfortable with me, because he asked if I knew about the rumour that had been circulating about me. Stunned I replied, "No," and he recounted the story for me.

Well! Apparently I have a ten year old son that no one told me about (which, by the way, would mean that I had him in high school). One of my students knew this wasn't possibly true because he's known me for the past nine years, but his protestations didn't do much to stop the rumour. And where did it come from? Supposedly I talked by this infamous ten year old son during one of my lectures – I must not have been present for that one! One student was adamant that she had heard me talk about my non-existent ten year old son and soon the entire School of Music knew about him.

Well, the entire School minus one – me. Was it the comment I made one day about my young cousin? Perhaps it was a misunderstanding as I discussed exoticism in *Brother Bear* (another student had talked about a child she knew who enjoyed that movie). Or maybe this student was simply asleep during my class that day and had quite the dream! I can't say for certain, nor will I ever know. Who can say where these unbelievable (yet believed) pieces of folklore come from?

So, I guess that what goes around really does come around. I who have passed the stories about Professor X have now become Professor X. But I have to admit, that rumour is one of the funniest moments of my life, all the more having hung out with folklorists for a few years...

Jan Tulk

Be in the Know!

Sarah Moore

Joining Professional Societies

So, you want to be a folklorist. Great! One of the best ways to get to know people is to join professional academic societies - there are many in varied disciplines such as folklore, anthropology, cultural studies, popular music, you get the idea. By joining such a group you will receive group newsletters with current information for members, a copy of the society's journal, and sometimes, membership to specialty listservs. When you join a society, you have the opportunity to go (and present at) annual conferences, plus you get to network with people you only dreamed of meeting! Conferences are a great way to present your unique research, while building up your c.v. and gaining valuable experience at the same time!

FSAC (<http://www.celat.ulaval.ca/acef>)

The Folklore Studies Association of Canada organizes an annual bilingual conference in Canada and publishes the bi-annual journal *Ethnologies*. Membership in this association is only \$25, which includes a subscription to the journal. There are opportunities for students to get involved in the association as representatives, gaining excellent experience for the future, and students may

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submit papers or book reviews.

You may join FSAC/ACEF by downloading a printable form from their webpage, (<http://www.celat.ulaval.ca/acef/joining.htm>) and sending it to the FSAC Secretary. The cost of membership is \$25 CDN for students.

AFS (<http://www.afsnct.org/index.cfm>)

The American Folklore Society organizes an annual conference in the United States. This year's conference will be held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from Oct. 18-22, and its theme is "Homelands and Diasporas." The 2007 AFS conference will be jointly held with FSAC and is set to meet in Quebec City. This conference is sure to be very exciting, and an excellent opportunity to meet leading folklorists from other countries.

As a member you will receive 4 issues of the *Journal of American Folklore* yearly, as well as six issues of *American Folklore Society News* per year. Membership benefits include a 20% discount on conference registration, a 20% discount on purchases to the Smithsonian Folkways Recordings catalogue, an 85% discount for pre-publication purchases for the MLA/AFS annual international bibliography of folklore scholarship and an exclusive members-only directory of folklorists (including areas of specialty).

A student membership to AFS costs \$35 USD and you may register for membership, the conference, or both, online.

Other Societies that may be of interest

FLS (The Folklore Society)

<http://www.folklore-society.com/index.htm>

ISCLR (International Society for Contemporary Legend Research)

<http://www.panam.edu/faculty/mglazer/isclr/isclr.htm>

IASPM (International Association for the Study of Popular Music)

<http://www.iaspm.ca/>

CSTM (Canadian Society for Traditional Music)

<http://www.yorku.ca/cstm/>

ISFN (International Society for Folk Narrative Research)

<http://www.folklore.org.il/ISFNR/>

AAA (American Anthropological Association)

<http://www.aaanet.org/memsvr.htm>

**“By the Skin of My Teeth”: Presenting at FSAC in York University
May, 2006
Lisa Machin**

I have always wondered about the origins of that phrase, as it has been the status quo for just about everything in my state of affairs for quite some time now. I was so very pleased to be able to go to Toronto for this year's FSAC Conference, with the help of university funding. It was the first conference presentation I had done in more than ten years. As a full-time mom and a student in the few stolen hours I could manage away from my children, I had not been able to get it together until now to even imagine presenting a paper, and now so very near the completion of my thesis, I thought this an ideal opportunity to get it "out there".

My paper was scheduled for the last morning of the conference, May 29th. I was staying with my aunt, in downtown Toronto, and I left the house at about 7 a.m. It was a beautiful morning. As I rounded the corner on to Roncesvalles, my cell phone rang - it was my husband Mike calling from St. John's to inform me that the TTC (Toronto Transit Commission) operators were on a wildcat strike, and that all the streetcars, subways and buses were not running! I nearly dropped the phone. I hung up and began walking in the direction of the Dundas West Station, hand outstretched to hail a cab, and while dialling the few taxi numbers I knew. I walked like that for about two hours in 37 C heat, without seeing even one vacant taxi coming to a stop and with only a busy signal on my phone. Reaching the corner of Dundas West and Keel, I saw a taxi coming to a stop with no one in it and so I ran across the road.

Before I could even ask if I could get in, the driver pointed ahead of him and I saw a woman on the other side of the intersection that had a red and white conference bag. I was saved!

I called out and waved my conference program and she mentioned for me to come over. Reaching the other side, I saw a young man explaining to the driver where we were going. The taxi driver hurriedly explained that he would not go to York, something about the traffic and refused to take us. The young man apologized and jumped into the cab and left the woman and I standing there - mouths gaping. Looking at my watch I saw it was 9:30 a.m. and my paper was scheduled for 10:30 a.m. My spirits began to sag. I was going to miss my paper presentation if I didn't get a taxi soon! My new friend and I introduced ourselves and began to resume taxi flagging - she was working the book fair on campus and I explained about my paper. At about 9:45 a.m. her phone rang - her father calling to check on her, and miracle of miracles, he was only two blocks away in his car. We arrived at the York campus at about 10:15 a.m. After saying thank you about fifty times, I ran through campus to get to my presentation, and arrived hot and exhausted, 10 minutes before the panel would begin, but very thankful I was not the first person to present. I think I began to shake even more when I stood up to speak, as I realized that I had indeed made it there, "by the skin of my teeth." Composing myself, I realized I had to keep going, and that it didn't matter how I got there, and that all those years of hard and enthusiastic work was too important to me to give up now.

~ Lisa Machin

Notable and Newsworthy MUN Folklore Students Make their Mark

Ph.D. Candidate Jodi McDavid has accepted a position as archivist for the Beaton Institute Archives at Cape Breton University in August. As archivist, she is in charge of community outreach, acquiring and preserving collections, and providing leadership to the staff. This is no small feat as there are over 1.5 km of records, including 1500 videos, 2000 maps and plans, 3500 sound recordings, 60,000 photographs and hundreds of fonds. In her spare time she is also teaching an independent study Public Sector course with an emphasis on archival work. To see the Beaton Institute Archives can be viewed online at: <http://beaton.uccb.ns.ca/home.php>.

Ph. D. Candidate Ian Brodie is now the Chair of the Heritage and Culture Department at Cape Breton University.

Ph.D. Candidate Jon Lee was married in August to fiancé Lynnette. Aside from this wonderful occasion, Jon recently published his first book of poetry. Congratulations!

Ph. D. Student Amber Ridington was married in August to fiancé Andrew. Congratulations!

Ph. D. Student Tara Simmonds was married in August to fiancé Clarke. Congratulations!

Ph. D. Student Sarah Moore welcomed a new addition to her family, a 4 lbs., 6 oz., miniature schnauzer, Rudy, who arrived in Newfoundland in July. Rudy is now 10 lbs., 2 oz., completely crate trained and can do "sit" "come" "down" "paw" and "no" (sometimes).

Do you have something exciting to share with the department? Contact Transmission at culture@mun.ca with the word "Transmission" in the title.

Welcome New Students!

M.A.

Barbara Gravinese

Jeffery Learning

Leslie Pierce

Katherine Stout

Emily Urquhart

Catherine Wiseman

Ph.D.

Betty Jo Brannan

Joy Fraser

Karlie King

Lynn Matte

Maureen Power

Puja Sahney

Summer Research

Rita Colavincenzo

This past summer I attended three different conferences before heading to Ireland to begin research for my Master's thesis. I attended the Folklore Studies Association of Canada (FSAC) meeting at York University, the first annual Canadian Association for Food Studies (CAFS) meeting (also part of the Social Science and Humanities Congress at York), and the Association

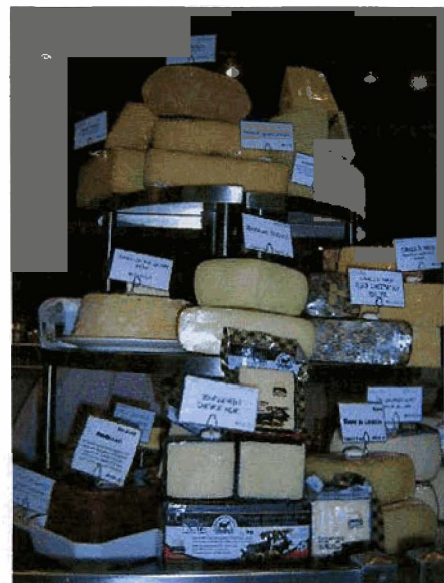


for the Study of Food and Society (ASFS) meeting in Boston. I gave different versions of a paper entitled "Peasant Food in Disguise: Cheese as a Class Indicator," based on my work experience in the cheese business in Washington D.C. At each conference I found an engaged audience and was excited that my paper generated interest from diverse academic fields. I was particularly surprised to find my name in the National Post as well as to receive e-mails from an individual from British Columbia working with raw milk cheese producers as well as one from Harpers Magazine.

In the latter part of the summer, I did research in Ireland at University College Dublin in the James Delargy Center for Irish Folklore for my Master's thesis on Irish food culture. Here I began sifting through the index cards on particular Irish foodstuffs while attempting to jog my memory for the correct Irish-Gaelic word for terms like 'shore gathering' (cnuasach trá) and cheese (cais)! I alternated my archival research with visits to Irish markets to scope out particular food producers. The markets I visited ranged from the greater Dublin area (Temple Bar to Howth) to ones in West Cork in the towns of Skibberrean and Schull. I also spoke with individuals from the West Cork area. These included one man who produces Ummerra Smoked Irish Salmon (wild and organic) and a woman whose family produces Caherbeg Pork Products, made from free range pigs. Both are involved in the West Cork Slow Food Movement and actively support the maintenance of traditional Irish foods products.

I plan to return to Ireland in the coming year to continue my field work and thesis writing where I will focus on the current revival of food as a cultural tourist attraction, particularly in the West Cork area.

Rita Colavincenzo



Folklore Department Graduate Student Positions

Lynn Matte

There are a variety of positions now available for students to fill for the 2006-07 year. The jobs cover a wide range of interests and offer interesting opportunities to get involved with the department and campus life. The individual who filled the position in the past year is listed in brackets.

Graduate Review Committee Reps

PhD (Andrea Kitta), **MA** (Kiersten Hill - no longer in town)

This is a departmental committee that includes faculty and students. The committee makes decisions about the Graduate level programs including what courses will be on offer - student input here is essential!

Archive Sub-Committee Graduate Reps

PhD (Anne Lafferty) **MA** (Heather King)

This committee has input into how the archive is run, initiatives to obtain funding for the archive and how to facilitate grad students working in the archive.

MUNFL Publications - Editorial Board Graduate Rep (Andrea Kitta)

The department is responsible for a number of publications (which grad students can purchase through the department office for a discount!). This committee works on new publications and reprinting old items.

Mary A Griffiths Memorial Bursary Award Committee Grad Reps

(Lynda Daneliuk & Brent Slade)

This committee determines those who will be awarded the Mary Griffiths Bursary. They review applications. People sitting on the committee obviously cannot make decisions about applications they themselves have submitted. The award is given to students who will be performing Newfoundland based field research.

Faculty Meetings Grad Rep (Lynda Daneliuk)

The faculty holds monthly meetings. The Rep is not able to sit in on all matters of discussion but is meant to present any graduate student concerns to the faculty.

Space Cadet (Jed Baker)

The Space Cadet is responsible for maintaining graduate student spaces. These include the kitchen/dishwashing photocopy area, the desk/computer space and the mailbox/telephone area as well as the two graduate student offices located in Feild Hall (above Bitters). The Space Cadet ensures that people do their dishes, that there is dish soap available by soliciting donations for its purchase and that the areas stay clean and tidy. This person also has the opportunity to ask students how these spaces can be improved and search for funds to make those changes happen.

GSU Representative (Jed Baker)

The Graduate Students' Union meets monthly on a Thursday evening. The Board of Directors is comprised of a Graduate student representative from each department as well as five Executive members. It is essential that our department have representation on this board. The Board

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controls the GSU funds and offers opportunities to sit on committees all across campus. A \$50 per term honorarium is available to the representative if they attend all meetings in a term (4-5) and sit on no less than two committees. Not too shabby!

Brown Bag Lunch Coordinator (Sarah Moore)

Brown bag Lunches are organized talks that take place weekdays between 12 and 2 (either 12-1 or 1-2). Students have the opportunity to give presentations or sit in on the presentations of others. Presenters include students, faculty and invited guests. The coordinator liases with Cindy and Sharon to book space for presentations and solicits presenters.

Graduate Student Coordinator (Kristine Nolte)

This position handles co-ordinating graduate student meetings, events, new incoming students liaison.

Sessional Instructors Rep (Jon Lee)

This person should be a sessional instructor - PhD students time to step up! This person mediates on behalf of all sessional instructors to the department.

Graduate Curriculum Reps

PhD (Anne Lafferty), MA (Brent Slade)

These students have input into program requirements and how the department can best meet the needs of graduate students as far as course offerings and timetables.

If you are interested in any of the above positions, or have questions, please feel free to contact the department, myself or the person who previously filled the position. These positions should be filled as soon as possible. Everyone is invited to meet on Monday, the **25th of September** in ED-4051 at **12:30 p.m.**

Folklore Society

The MUN Folklore Society is a student organization for all students, from undergraduates to doctoral candidates, who are either pursuing Folklore Studies, or who are interested in learning more about folklore, ethnography, ethnomusicology, performance and general cultural studies. The Society hosts a variety of exciting events each year which allow students to get to know one another, including mixers, fundraisers and movie nights. Events for the 2006-2007 academic year include a Halloween Mixer, Anti-Valentine's Day Mixer, Mary Griffiths Bursary Fundraiser, Christmas Party, various movie and event nights, charity fundraisers, community outreach programs, and our 2nd Annual Day of Interdisciplinary Papers - a mini-conference which had its inception in November 2005.



Watch out for the upcoming annual Hallowe'en mixer - date TBA!

About Transmission . . .

Transmission is an occasional publication. Submissions may be sent at any time and will be included in the next issue. We welcome short essays, reviews, notes & queries, as well as news from folklore departments and fellow travellers across Canada.

Correspondence may be sent to:
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Email us at: culture@mun.ca
Check out our webpage:
www.uccs.mun.ca/~culture
for back issues and more.

- We are hoping to make this newsletter available to undergraduates and have it provide people with useful and timely information. We encourage undergraduates to contact us if they are interested in getting involved with the newsletter, through writing, organisation, brainstorming, or handing out issues in their classes. Email culture@mun.ca with subject heading "Transmission."
- We're interested in receiving any feedback or critiques. Let us know what we can do for you! Simply contact us at culture@mun.ca with subject heading "Transmission."
- Anonymous questions can be sent to us at any time. Please mention in your email if you wish to remain anonymous.
- Submit recent achievements, an abstract from a conference paper, a short statement of research interests.
- Submit selections of interview transcripts for publication (please ensure that you have permission from interviewees).