

Cape Breton University

Winter 2011

Ian Brodie

FOLK & FINA 113:
INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE II:
FOLK GENRES AND ANALYSIS

ME!

- ✕ Originally from Ottawa
- ✕ BA from St. Thomas, MA and PhD from Memorial
- ✕ Degrees in both Religious Studies and Folklore
- ✕ Current Research
 - + Stand-up Comedy and Folklore
 - + The Sydney River Trestle Bridge
 - + Occupational Folklife of Canadian Immigration Foreign Service Officers

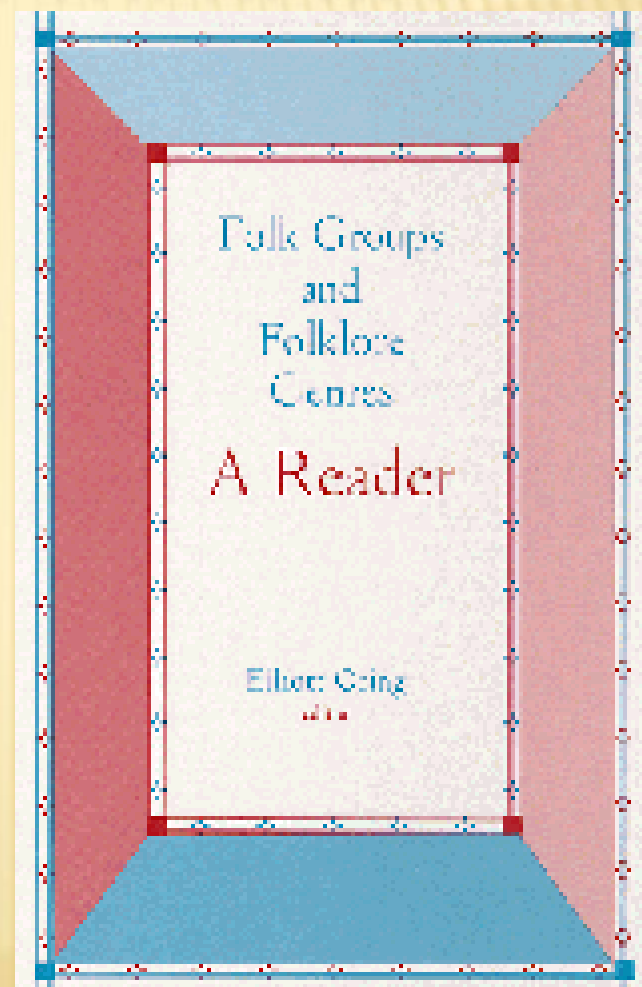
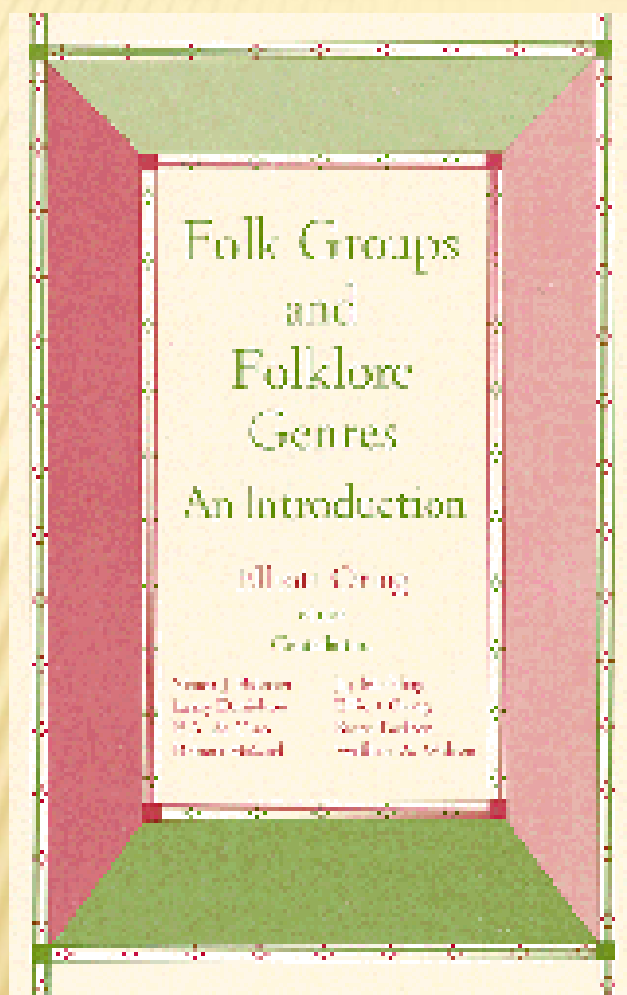
YOU!

- ✖ Empty vessels waiting to be filled with the warm juice of my freshly-squeezed wisdom
- ✖ Be patient while I go through the registration list
 - + (I don't take attendance but need to figure out who you people are: this won't last too long.)

US!

- ✖ Together for twelve (12) lovely weeks
- ✖ Reading two (2) lovely books
- ✖ Each writing one (1) lovely paper
- ✖ Each doing one (1) lovely ***electronic*** presentation
- ✖ Each answering ten (10) lovely questions for reflection
- ✖ Each writing one (1) final exam

BOOKS! (FUZZY PICTURES THEREOF!)



HOW TO READ THEM!

- ✕ Chapter from *Introduction* on Monday
- ✕ One of the readings from the corresponding section in the *Reader* on Wednesday
 - + See page 2 of the syllabus

FEEDBACK! (AN EASY 20%)

- ✖ Join Facebook (if you haven't already, luddite)
- ✖ Search for the cryptically-titled group "FOLK/FINA 113 – Winter 2011"
 - + Join it.
- ✖ On Wednesdays (starting January 12) I ask a question in a discussion thread
 - + You answer it through comments by the following Monday
- ✖ One mark for doing it on time, one mark for doing it more than half-assed.

ESSAY!

- ✗ We'll talk more about this over the course of the semester, but in brief:
 - + Identify a *folk group*
 - + Identify a *genre* of folklore in which they participate
 - + Study it *ethnographically*
 - + Put it into *context*
 - + Use *technical vocabulary*
 - + Write that puppy up

PRESENTATION!

✖ Problem:

- + More and more people are afraid of oral presentations: some skip them entirely.

✖ But:

- + All the kids today are good with the technical things like the YouTube and the Flash and the Manga and the TikTok and the URL and the like

✖ So:

- + Get your tech-savvy pants on!!

ELECTRONIC PRESENTATION!

- ✖ Present your group and their activity in an electronic format of your choosing: it must
 - + describe the group;
 - + show the activity;
 - + use technical vocabulary;
 - + be no more than four minutes long but no less than three; or it should have about 500 words of text;
 - + be largely original content, and give credit (citations) to anything taken from elsewhere;
 - + either on portable media or posted online to be shown in class
 - + work on a PC

EXAM!

- ✗ Some short answer, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank type stuff
- ✗ Choice of essay questions
- ✗ CHEAT SHEET PROVIDED!

Elliott Oring

ON THE CONCEPTS OF FOLKLORE

ON THE CONCEPTS OF FOLKLORE

- ✕ What is folklore?
- ✕ Obviously a compound of “folk” and “lore”, which begs the questions:
 - + What do we mean by “folk” (and its use as a prefix)?
 - + What do we mean by “lore” (and its use as a suffix)?

FOLK

- ✗ 19th Century term
- ✗ Literally, “the people” (as in the German *volk*)
- ✗ Connotation of “the common people”
 - + Rural, unlettered, non-cosmopolitan
 - + Explicitly “not us” (the educated, urban, male, middle and classes)
- ✗ Tends to retain that connotation
 - + Sometimes as a pejorative
 - + Sometimes as a measure of authenticity

FUN FACT! (DON'T WRITE THIS DOWN)

- ✗ In Chinese, the term which is used for folklore (the discipline) is 民俗學: 民 (mín) people, public, civilian, private; 俗 (sú) practices of valley people; 學 (xué) academic study. Of particular interest is 'mín': note how it is used in the following contexts:
 - + míngē (folksong); míngúo (republic); mínjian (of the people, non-governmental, private); mínjìndǎng (Democratic Progressive Party); mínquán (civil rights); mínshēng (people's livelihood); mínsù (folk customs); mínxīn (popular sentiment); mínxuǎn (popularly elected); mínyì (public opinion); mínyíng (privately operated); mínyùn (democracy movement); mínzhòng (the people); mínzhǔ (democracy); mínzú (ethnic group, people, nationality)

FOLK (TODAY)

- + Over time, there was a recognition that the thing we call folklore was not limited to a rural peasant class but existed among all people at all time (which we get to in a minute)
- + “Folk” (or, rather, “folkgroup”) became “two or more people who share at least one common factor”
 - ✗ Also, they are in communication with each other
 - ✗ And they find that factor significant
- + So, if folk is anybody, we have to turn to “lore”

LORE

- ✗ Not very helpful approach either
- ✗ Stuff? Understanding of stuff? Stories about stuff?
- ✗ See Dundes' list (page 2): good examples, but what links them?
- ✗ So, let's stop looking at the terms separately, and keep them together

FOLKLORE

- ✗ Return to the 18th and 19th centuries, and start to question why these things got started
- ✗ “Romantic nationalism”
 - + A nation was in part a product of its environment
 - + Modernity (industrialisation, education, etc.) had removed the middle and ruling classes from the environment
 - + “Outsiders” were being espoused as “higher cultures”

ROMANTIC NATIONALISM

- ✗ A nation can only be unified if it shares a distinct culture, which it holds to be the equivalent (or, often, *better*) than the cultures of others
- ✗ **But**, where to find it?
- ✗ **ANSWER:** Among “the folk,” the simple people still connected to the environment, landscape, etc., who have not been “corrupted” by external influence

THUS

- ✗ “Folklore” (“a fine Saxon compound” - Thoms) became the cultural remnants of an ancient past that reside among the rural peasantry
- ✗ Soon, with the advent of evolutionary theory and its offshoot, cultural evolution, this “ancient past” was reframed as an earlier stage of progress
 - + Savagery → Barbarism → Civilization
- ✗ Folklore was survivals from those stages

MORE CHANGES

- ✗ Both romantic nationalism and cultural evolutionary models claimed a continuity with a distant past
- ✗ Therefore, neither could account for new things
- ✗ North America changes that
 - + In Europe: middle and ruling classes arose from indigenous people
 - + In North America, middle and ruling classes arose from immigrant cultures

FOLKLORE STUDY IN NORTH AMERICA

- ✖ At first, only interested in First Nations, French Canada, Mexico, African-Americans, and whatever lore was brought by European peoples
- ✖ Soon, however, new lore was noted
 - + It existed among European-Americans
 - + **But** had no precedent in Europe
 - + **But** bore all the hallmarks of “folklore”

SO

- ✗ Rather than “ancient,” folklore conceived as “traditional”
- ✗ More importantly, emphasis turned to the process of how it is passed along
 - + “Oral,” “Face-to-face” → eventually, “informal”
- ✗ Thus, attention begins to be paid to *who* passes it along and to whom
- ✗ Becomes understood as a “performance”

MEANWHILE

- ✗ Redfield suggests the “folk society model”
 - + Isolated: little communication with outsiders, intense communication within itself
 - + Members are physically, behaviourally, and ideologically similar
 - + Simple division of labour; economically independent/self-sufficient; an exchange economy
 - + Non-literate

A MODEL

- ✗ This is a model: no culture exhibits all these traits, but many may more or less resemble them
- ✗ Thus “Folk” becomes defined not by its specific context – “peasantry” – but by its relative context – small and independent
- ✗ And thus, new folklore emerges when new groups operating in a folk society model emerge

SO...

- ✗ Folklore is not restricted to a type of community or strata of society
- ✗ Folklore is not restricted to a fixed canon of forms and items
- ✗ Folklore emerges in groups with a sense of “groupness”
- ✗ It is artistic communication
 - + Of the group; to the group; from the group

MEDIATING ROLE OF FOLKLORE

- ✗ To be in the group is to know the lore
- ✗ To know the lore is to be in the group
 - + Tautology, or chicken and egg thing?
- ✗ Two approaches to folklore study:
 - + Find the group, look at the lore they perform
 - ✗ or
 - + Find the lore, look for the group who performs it
- ✗ Kind of the same thing, but subtly different

SO...

- ✗ Is everything folklore?
- ✗ Not quite: it still tends to denote something distinct from both popular culture and high/elite culture, no matter how nebulous those boundaries may be
- ✗ Because it connotes a necessary relationship between the people who perform it and the group within which it is performed
- ✗ Interpersonal and human, not formal and institutional

Deirdre Evans-Pritchard

THE PORTAL CASE

THE PORTAL CASE:

- ✖ Authenticity, Tourism, Traditions, and the Law
- ✖ The subtitle pretty much summarises what we're going to talk about today
 - + Just to get us going, here's a warning: the entire semester will be (a) read something, (b) talk about it in class, (c) repeat. It will be AWESOME.
- ✖ <http://goo.gl/maps/wfco>

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

- ✖ The Portal at the Palace of the Governors is part of the Museum of New Mexico
- ✖ It had been a long-standing custom for “Indians” to sell their goods there
- ✖ Non-Indians were forcibly ejected when they tried to sell their crafts there, even though their crafts were indistinguishable from Indian
- ✖ Museum was sued for racial discrimination

(CONT.)

- ✘ Counter-claim was that this was “cultural” discrimination, not racial
- ✘ Worry was that inauthentic crafts would be confused with authentic, would devalue authentic, and so on.
- ✘ Case was dismissed, despite shaky legal grounds
- ✘ Custom of “Indian-exclusivity” became policy

QUESTIONS

- ✘ What is “authentic”? To whom? Why does it matter?
- ✘ What is tourism? How does tourism affect ideas of “authenticity”?
- ✘ What is “traditional”? What makes a thing (tangible or intangible) “traditional”?
- ✘ How does the law (the explicit power of the state) alter or protect “authenticity”?

Elliott Oring

ETHNIC GROUPS AND ETHNIC FOLKLORE

ETHNIC GROUPS AND ETHNIC FOLKLORE

- ✗ What is meant by “ethnic”?
- ✗ From Gr. → related terms for alternately “nation” and “heathen/Gentile”
 - + Just as “folk” had connotation of “not us” (the educated, urban, male, middle class)
 - + So too “ethnic” had connotation of “not us” (Anglo-European)
- ✗ Again, like “folk” it tends to retain that connotation
 - + Increasingly less so as a pejorative
 - + Sometimes as a measure of authenticity

TODAY:

- ✖ Connotes groupings “culturally distinguishable from a larger social system of which they form a part”
 - + Members of an ethnic group “it is claimed, share and identify with a historically derived cultural tradition or style”
 - + Membership is “acquired primarily by descent”

THE “CLAIM”

- ✗ Groups result from perceiving some similarity within a broader population of individual elements
- ✗ Groups may be merely statistical
 - + Size nine shoe; athlete's foot sufferers
- ✗ Folk groups emerge when such similarities are branded as “significant”
 - + By the members themselves
 - + By outsiders

EXAMPLE: THE “GYPSY”

- ✗ Perceived by the general population as one cultural group with shared traditions, practices, language, etc.
- ✗ Actually a number of nationalities (Rom, Ludari, Romnicel) with very little interaction: more likely to intermarry with “non-Gypsy” than with each other

A “SENSE” OF IDENTITY

- ✗ Can conflict with established categories
 - + (When ethnicity is a matter of public policy)
- ✗ Can be defined by context
 - + The example of Freud and “German” or “Jewish”
- ✗ Can be informed in part – but not wholly and not necessarily – by “racial” identity
 - + Physical, genetic properties (skin colour, physiognomy, etc.)
 - ✗ (Often cause for categorization by outsiders)

3 SOCIAL FORCES INFLUENCING “ETHNICITY”

- ✖ Nationalism, Colonialism, Immigration
 - + Nationalism: A sense of collective identity distinct from an outside or colonial power
 - + Colonialism: A sense of being under political control by an outside power
 - + Immigration: A sense of moving from one's own nation to another('s)
- ✖ (These can all be genuine historic moments, but we focus on the perception of these events)

ETHNIC FOLKLORE

✕ Folklore which

- + plays a part in the definition of ethnic groups;
- + comments upon or governs the interactions between different ethnic groups;
- + contributes to a sense of ethnic identity; or
- + constitutes and contributes to any ethnically based action

FORGED IN CONTRAST

- ✕ The esoteric/exoteric factor
 - + We have folklore that is based as much in our sense of identity as it is in our sense of other's identity

Frank E. Manning

CARNIVAL IN CANADA

CELEBRATION

- ✕ A paradox:

- + It is *autotelic* (one celebrates for the sake of celebrating), purely *expressive*, and *ludic* (about play)
- + It also has political connotations, a communication to outsiders of identity

- ✕ Both *culture* and *politics*

CARIBANA

- ✘ “West Indian” Festival in Toronto, originating in 1967 when West Indian community asked to participate in centennial
- ✘ Imported Trinidadian masqueraders: parade in downtown Toronto (moved to Montreal for Expo 67)
- ✘ Decision was made for it to be ongoing: original organisers became permanent committee

HOWEVER

- ✗ “West Indian” not a term of positive connotation for Caribbean people
- ✗ Island cultures largely defined in sharp contrast to other islands
- ✗ An implied hierarchy based on island size
 - + Smaller = backwards
 - + Larger = aggressive and domineering

SO...

- ✖ Jamaica (largest island) most unliked by all the others, reluctant to engage with others
- ✖ Trinidad (next largest) seen as small island by Jamaica, but dominates (and is thus unliked) by eastern Caribbean
- ✖ Smaller islands often unite in opposition to Jamaica and Trinidad but retain hierarchical divisions amongst themselves

INSULARITY CONTINUES

- ✖ Insularity (Latin –insula “island”)
 - + literal and metaphorical connotations
 - + (cf. the persistent use of “Island” to refer to Cape Breton, even as a metonym)
- ✖ Social organisations, fraternal clubs, churches continue to be organised along island origins

SO...

- ✗ Jamaica drops out, having no “carnival” tradition
- ✗ Organization becomes dominated by Trinidad, for which carnival is the major festival

CARNIVAL

- ✕ From Latin carne “flesh” (as in reincarnate, chili con carne, etc.)
- ✕ A feast of flesh
 - + Literally, the eating of meat prior to a period of fasting and abstention (Lent)
 - + Metaphorically, focused on the body and not the spirit
 - ✕ Mardi Gras in New Orleans, etc.

FLESH!

- ✗ <http://www.cbc.ca/toronto/features/caribana2008/history.html>
- ✗ <http://www.tradebit.com/filedetail.php/80086051-street-dancing>

MORE COMPLEXITY

- ✘ Trinidadian committee members desired a Trinidadian-style carnival
- ✘ Smaller island representatives wanted a pan-Caribbean style carnival and other forms of display
- ✘ Trinidad eventually drops out, recreates carnival, replete with lingo, dance styles, etc.

EVEN MORE COMPLEXITY

- ✗ Trinidad historically multi-racial, with carnival understood as a black festival within but incorporating multi-ethnic musicians
 - + Trinidad see *cultural* similarity as basis of solidarity
- ✗ Smaller islands largely black-only, with a different history of influences
 - + *Racial* similarity basis of solidarity, despite cultural differences

CLASS

- ✘ Caribana (expensive, reserved) seen as a bourgeois, serious, educational festival
- ✘ As opposed to Carnival, open, exciting, etc.
- ✘ Funding eventually forced a merger

Larry Danielson

RELIGIOUS FOLKLORE

THE DILEMMA

- ✗ What is “religious folklore”?
- ✗ How do we distinguish “religious folklore” from institutional religious practice?
- ✗ If the two are distinct, how do we study the former without impugning the integrity of the belief stance of the adherents?

WHAT IS RELIGION?

- ✘ A set of traditional belief practices rooted in **narratives**
- ✘ Narratives recount direct encounter with supernatural/transcendent/”supranormal”
- ✘ Narratives purport to be the communication of a greater understanding of the nature of existence – “Revelation” (the Xian term)
- ✘ Narratives express or implies a set of imperatives/proscriptions

(MORE)

- ✖ Narratives (and commentaries thereof) are formalised and become subject to special processes of transmission, either committed to a tangible medium (paper, etc.) or entrusted to special practitioners in oral tradition (elders, etc.)
- ✖ These *texts* become basis for faith communities
 - + *Myths*

NARRATIVE: THREE MAJOR GENRES

- ✗ Märchen (tale) – fictions, take place in a time out of time, told as entertainments but (often) with a pedagogical function, public performances
- ✗ Legend: opportunities for the negotiation of an underlying belief or assumption, take place in recognizable history, private performances, non-specialised practitioners.
- ✗ Myth: absolutely true (within its performance context), left to specific members of the community to perform, tells of foundational – existential – events.
 - + (More about this on Valentine's Day!)

FAITH COMMUNITIES

- ✗ Built upon the interpretation of these texts
 - + but also
- ✗ Built upon the cumulative history of that interpretation
- ✗ Typically develop specialised practitioners
 - + For ongoing interpretation
 - + For enactment of *ritual*
- ✗ Loosely, the model for “institutional religion”

WHAT IS RITUAL?

- ✗ An enactment, a performance that is based in part on foundational narratives
 - + Informed by the cumulative history of the ritual's prior performances
- ✗ This enactment is a re-enactment of a pivotal moment in the sacred narrative
- ✗ By *imitating* it, one transcends the spatio-temporal distance between self and the original protagonists

EXAMPLES OF RITUAL

- ✘ The *bris*, the ritual circumcision of Jewish boys, repeats and re-enacts the circumcision of Abraham and Isaac, which was a sign of the covenant and a promise that God would never ask for the sacrifice of one's own son
- ✘ The *Eucharist*, the communion of bread and wine among (most) Christians, repeats and re-enacts the Last Supper in the Garden of Gethsemane, the night prior to Jesus' execution

RITUALS (CONT.)

- ✕ Take place at a sacred time
- ✕ Take place at a sacred place
- ✕ Are expressly offset from the ordinary, profane time and place
- ✕ Imply a certain amount of *magic*

MAGIC

- ✖ James Frazer's idea of "Sympathetic Magic"
- ✖ Things can have an effect on other things
 - + If they are similar to each other – "homeopathic magic"
 - + If they have been in contact with each other – "contagious magic"
- ✖ Ritual is magical because:
 - + In imitation it resembles the original action
 - + Special practitioners or objects have been (or are claimed to have been) in a chain of contact

WHAT ABOUT “FOLK RELIGION”?

- ✗ People are born into faith communities
- ✗ These communities are informed by – perhaps even checked against – institutional religion
- ✗ Have a history equally informed by other “common factors” (i.e. by other folk groups)
 - + Nationality, region, language, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, occupation, etc.
- ✗ Negotiate those various identities

FOLK RELIGION IS THUS...

- ✖ The set of practices on the vernacular level that communicate the common religious belief of the group to itself
 - + Informed by an understanding of institutional religious expectations
 - + Specifically addresses those areas about which institutional religion is largely silent or indifferent
- ✖ Can occasionally be in direct conflict with institutional religion

Shlomo A. Deshen

ETHNICITY AND CITIZENSHIP

THE ISSUE

- ✗ Remember the joke Oring wrote about in his chapter on “Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Folklore”?
 - + The one about the Romanian Jew leaving Israel and moving back to Romania.
- ✗ Identity is contextual

THE SYNAGOGUE

- ✕ From a variety of Eastern Maghreb communities
- ✕ Originally Southern Tunisians from the town of Gabès the predominant actors
- ✕ Later, Southern Tunisians from Djerba came to the fore

MAGHREB



DILEMMA

- ✗ In Maghreb, identity shaped by two influences
 - + “Jewishness” and minority status
- ✗ In Israel, identity shaped by two influences
 - + Ethnicity and minority status

SO...

- ✗ “Folk” religiosity – participation in a larger faith community but expressed through localised forms – shifts to new context
- ✗ Competing ethnicities
- ✗ Larger Nationalist identity
- ✗ Pan-Jewish identity

EXAMPLES:

- ✕ The Naming of the Synagogue
- ✕ The Commemoration of Two Gallant Men
- ✕ The Changing of the High Holy Days Garments
 - + The adaptation of a new first name
- ✕ The Correction of Mistakes During Service

MAGIC

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Robert McCarl

OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLORE

I LOVE THE CRAP OUT OF THIS ONE

- ✗ So far, most of the groups we have covered are ones you are born into
 - + We can argue about adopted ethnicity
 - + And certainly, people convert and adopt not only the religious tenets but the folk religious practices of a group
- ✗ But, this is where we start talking about voluntary participation in a group

WHAT IS 'OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE'?

- ✗ “Occupation” implies a set of techniques and skills
- ✗ This set of skills occasions verbal forms – jargon, narrative – along with customs (rites of passage, rites of intensification) and material culture (costume, decoration, etc.)
- ✗ The occupation cannot be disentangled from the folk forms that it gives rise to

THE 'CANON OF WORK TECHNIQUE'

- ✗ Not an *explicit* skill-set, but an *implicit* standard against which a worker is measured
 - + “canon” from Gr. “kanon” → a reed, a unit of measurement
- ✗ This standard is created and controlled by the workers themselves
 - + Status in the group is determined by one’s mastery of the canon

SUBTLE DISTINCTION

- ✘ The issue of the canon is employed to define “good worker,” *not* (necessarily) a “good employee”
- ✘ Status among workers is not necessarily commensurate with rank as determined by managers
- ✘ Often, occupational lore is about tension between management and worker

WITHIN OCCUPATIONAL CULTURE

- ✖ The initiate might have (likely has) official training
- ✖ As yet does not have an understanding of the group's canon
- ✖ Contexts arise for negotiating and explaining canon
- ✖ Not done through direct pedagogy, but through informal means

CULTURAL SCENES

- ✖ A recurrent social situation in which two or more people share some aspect of their cultural knowledge or folklore
 - + Coffee breaks, drinks after work, downtime, mundane restorative work that allows for interaction (maintenance, etc.)
- ✖ Allows for evaluation of performance, employing narratives and insider (esoteric) lingo and jargon

(MORE)

- ✖ By connecting to previous narrated events, allows for continued evaluation of episodes not witnessed by (all) members present
 - + Thus: a 'tradition,' in as much as there is a sense of continuity with the past
- ✖ Storytelling becomes a cumulative experience, where each participant can contribute own experiences and critiques

LANGUAGE

- ✗ Jargon and joking build on both metaphor and insider knowledge
- ✗ Personalises the world through the occupational perspective
- ✗ Demonstrates an understanding of the canon
- ✗ Implicitly excludes those for whom the jargon makes no sense

rites of passage

- ✗ Discussed (loosely) already?
- ✗ Customs used to mark a transition in status within a group
 - + Including non-member to member, and member to ex-member
- ✗ Shifts in status occasion changes in rights, privileges, responsibilities
 - + Shall I go on about this? It's important, but if I've covered it already...

WHY THIS READING IS SO GOOD

- ✗ Forget “occupations” for a moment
- ✗ In all groups, we have an implied hierarchy based in part on the “deepness” of the understanding of the group itself
- ✗ The very concept of “elder” seems inherently connected to a concept of “mastering the canon”
- ✗ Take, for example, fan cultures, residence life, etc.

(MORE)

- ✖ The way this basic study of occupational folklife can be extended to other kinds of groups is extraordinary.
- ✖ Read it again, for funsies. It is really that awesome.

Michael J. Bell

TENDING BAR AT BROWN'S

‘OCCUPATIONAL FOLKLIFE’

- ✗ “Occupation” implies a set of techniques and skills
- ✗ The ‘canon of work technique’
 - + Not an explicit skill-set, but an implicit standard against which a worker is measured
 - + Status in the group is determined by one’s mastery of the canon

WHAT IS A BAR FOR?

- ✖ A “third space”: somewhere distinctly different from both work and home
- ✖ An opportunity for leisure activities in a non-hierarchical place
 - + Communitas
- ✖ Play

BARTENDING AS ARTISTIC PERFORMANCE

- ✗ What does this mean?
- ✗ Bartending not a passive profession
 - + Drink distribution
- ✗ But active profession
 - + “Standing at the center of the societal ambivalence over public drinking”
- ✗ Bars:
 - + Sell as much alcohol as possible but
 - + Not so much as to develop a bad reputation

THE BARTENDER

- ✕ Creates an atmosphere in which people keep drinking, but not allowing people to become so drunk as to constitute a threat to the social order
- ✕ This ethnography
 - + A middle-class black bar in Philadelphia
 - + Focussed on two female bartenders
 - ✕ Transform Brown's into a "lively place"

PERFORMANCE

- ✗ A framework for their participation in the life of the bar
- ✗ Explicit expectations and rules for conduct
- ✗ Presented themselves not as “who they were” but as “who they needed to be for the job”
 - + Patrons: reflexive, not an act of conscious purpose
 - + Bartender: reflective, deliberate (self-) presentation
- ✗ Different roles for different “bars”

HARRIET (DAYTIME)

- ✖ Saw her role as creating liveliness in the otherwise quiet bar
- ✖ Establishing connections between customers
 - + “Most of the customers who come here during the day are looking to bullshit with someone. [...] If I can get something happening, they’ll play with it and keep it going.”

(MORE HARRIET)

- ✗ Building “frame” supportive to “talking shit”
- ✗ Evoking relevant expressions of play within that frame
- ✗ I won’t type it out, but
 - + Passage on page 151, last full paragraph.
- ✗ “Raps” like a man

SARAH (NIGHTTIME)

- ✗ “The people who come here at night don’t need me to tell them to party. [...] My problem is slowing their roll.”
- ✗ Preserve the frame rather than create one for them.
- ✗ Flow of social life maintained by regulation of social boundaries: action left to the patrons

THE POINT?

- ✘ Certain occupational roles are best understood as extended artistic performances by highly conscious actors.
- ✘ Above the execution of the explicit task (dispensing drinks), the technique of the bartender is a highly developed implicit skill-set of maintaining a frame for appropriate performance

Jay Mechling

CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE

REASONS FOR THIS WEEK'S AWESOMENESS

- a. Better than any other reading, it describes the idea of belonging to multiple folk groups both over the course of one's life and at any one given time
- b. It messes with your mind about childhood: just because you were a child, that doesn't mean you know what it's like to be one any more

THE POINT

We all think we know what it means to be a child. Studying the child, therefore, has layers of motive and meaning often not present in other folklore inquiry, since we tend to project our own childhood experiences upon others and may attempt to recapture an especially pleasant period in our lives. (91)

THE CHILD

- ✗ In nineteenth century, tended to see childhood culture as equivalent to primitive culture
- ✗ Childhood became, effectively, “adulthood in potency,” not something whole and meaningful in its own right
 - + *Triviality barrier*
- ✗ “Childhood” not a cross-cultural constant but ethnocentric
- ✗ “The Invention of Childhood”

METHOD

- ✗ Do not assume child = unsocialised adult
- ✗ Approaches children's folk cultures as if they were fully developed, complex, and autonomous
- ✗ Retains the same issues of exoteric understanding that is present to the study of all "other" cultures

ALSO...

- ✗ Where to draw line?
 - + Pubescence?
 - + Entry into high school?
 - + Entry into university?
 - + Entry into work force?
- ✗ He never quite says it, but one could argue that throughout our lives there exist folk groups in which we participate that are largely akin to “childhood”

FLOW OF GROUP MEMBERSHIP

- ✗ Family → Peers within family (siblings, cousins)
 - + Allows for activities separate from parents
- ✗ Neighborhood
 - + Allows for activities separate from family
- ✗ Schools
 - + Under dominant setting, counter-cultures developed and maintained
 - + But encourages / forces age-stratification
- + Other organised activities
 - + Age, possibly gender stratification

(MORE)

- ✗ Institutions patterned on adult theories of child development
- ✗ Stratification also encourages certain genres over others
 - + Cf. Contemporary Legend
- ✗ Also, folk groups emerge in informal settings
 - + Mall, street corner, etc.

Autonomous children's folk cultures can emerge within informal groups as well as in groups highly structured by adults. (96)

4 TENSIONS FOUND IN CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE

- ✗ Order vs. disorder
- ✗ Hierarchy vs. equality
- ✗ Male vs. female
- ✗ Dynamic vs. conservative

ORDER VS. DISORDER

- ✗ Children tend to desire orderliness and adults tend to impose an order upon children
- ✗ In *play*, which is understood as non-serious, non-consequential, antithetical activities can be experimented with
 - + Cruelty, obscenity, danger

ORDER VS. DISORDER (CONT.)

- ✕ Other forms allow for antithesis
 - + Parody – using an established structure for subversive expression
 - + Nonsense – subverting the very idea of clarity of meaning
 - + Secrecy – coding of messages, retention of some control in under-privileged contexts

HIERARCHY VS. EQUALITY

- ✗ Often employ folklore to create a feeling of egalitarian community against the structured world adults create for them
- ✗ Simultaneously, often highly hierarchical
 - + Teases: a playful othering and marking of difference within and fostering egalitarian relationships
 - + Taunts: a more deliberate othering and marking of difference within and fostering hierarchical relationships
- ✗ (Highly contextual: requires ethnographic interpretation)

HIERARCHY VS. EQUALITY (CONT.)

- ✗ Playfighting
 - ✗ “It” games
 - ✗ Bagtag
-
- ✗ There are likely subtle differences along gender lines, although they too might be fading

MALE VS. FEMALE

- ✗ Creation of gender identity
 - + Through affiliation
 - + Through non-affiliation
 - + Through traditional modes of gender activity
- ✗ Occurs both at time when gender differences are being blurred but also when anxiety over the idea that it is a construct has arisen (post-1970s)

DYNAMIC VS. CONSERVATIVE

- ✗ Simultaneously retains much of what went before it
- ✗ Plays with the form to allow for new applications
- ✗ Invites new forms
- ✗ Again, parody provides best example

Kenneth S. Goldstein

STRATEGY IN COUNTING OUT

GOLDSTEIN

- ✖ Ethnographically based
- ✖ Determines not simply the explicit rules for counting out but the implicit rules for when to apply them
- ✖ Attempting to move past counting-out rhymes as texts to games
- ✖ 8 groups from the same neighborhood, differentiated by age and gender

COUNTING-OUT

- ✗ Is it
 - + A game of “chance”?
 - + A game of “strategy”?
- ✗ Claimed to be democratic, fair, “fate”
- ✗ However, can be deliberately manipulated for desired outcomes

STRATEGIES

- ✕ Rhyme extension
- ✕ Choice of rhyme repertory
- ✕ Skipping regular counts
- ✕ Stopping or continuing
- ✕ Changing positions
- ✕ Respite by calling out

Elliott Oring

FOLK NARRATIVES

ORING

- ✗ Narrative:
- ✗ Verbal
- ✗ Story told in a certain order
- ✗ Certain things have to happen
- ✗ Initial situation → complicating action → resolution
- ✗ Characters who experience / undertake those actions

TRUE OR FALSE

- ✗ Does it matter?
- ✗ “Just entertainment”?
 - + Educational / pedagogy
 - + What about sacred narratives?
- ✗ Tale: a story that is not told as true (not meant to be a record of objective, ontological events)
- ✗ Myth: sacred narratives – understood as true, absolutely so, within their performance context

TRUE OR FALSE (CONT)

- ✗ Legend: opportunities for the negotiation of a truth claim
- ✗ Local aesthetics
 - + Storyteller

VERSION AND TYPE

- ✗ A set of descriptors, a set of expectations for a particular item
 - + Thanksgiving dinner: a type
 - ✗ Turkey, potatoes, stuffing, carrots
 - ✗ Table decoration, family assembled, autumnal celebration
 - + Your thanksgiving 2010: a version
 - ✗ Particular guests, particular turkey, your crazy grandma's gravy, etc.
- ✗ The general vs. the specific

NARRATIVE:

- ✗ Something verbal (typically)
- ✗ An account of some event or events
- ✗ Certain things have to happen
 - + Initial situation → complicating action → resolution
- ✗ Told in a certain order
 - ✗ Some idea of a logical sequence
- ✗ Includes characters who experience / undertake those actions

TRUE OR FALSE?

- ✗ Does it matter?
- ✗ “Just entertainment”?
 - + Educational / pedagogy
 - + What about sacred narratives?

NARRATIVES DISTINGUISHED BY “TRUTH”

- ✖ Myth: sacred narratives – understood as true, absolutely so, within their performance context
- ✖ Tale: a story that is not told as true (not meant to be a record of objective, ontological events)
- ✖ Legend: opportunities for the negotiation of a truth claim

NARRATIVES DISTINGUISHED BY “TELLER”

- ✗ Myth: reserved for specialised, typically sacred practitioners
 - + Priesthood, elders, etc.
 - + Often preserved in writing, but reading similarly reserved
- ✗ Tale: (typically) reserved for recognised practitioners, those who have a local reputation for fluency
 - + Grasp of local aesthetics
 - + Command of a repertoire
- ✗ Legend: a private, interpersonal genre

NARRATIVES DISTINGUISHED BY “AUDIENCE”

- ✗ Myth: told in public, group contexts at special/sacred times
 - + The narrative informs the sense of “groupness” and its history
- ✗ Tale: (often) told in public, group contexts at times of leisure
 - + The narrative informs the sense of “groupness” through a shared fluency in the fantastic
- ✗ Legend: told in private between intimates
 - + The narrative tests the worldview and puts it into question

MYTH

- ✖ Existential narratives that inform the worldview and collective self-understanding of the group
- ✖ Episodes from the narrative are often re-enacted in ritual (rites of passage or intensification)
 - + Baptism, the Eucharist, Stations of the Cross
 - + Mid-Autumn Festival 八月十五殺韃子
- ✖ These ritual performances transcend the distance in space and time between the participants and the original actors

TALE

- ✗ Primarily a medium of entertainment (with many overtones of pedagogy, establishment / reaffirmation of worldview, etc.)
- ✗ More cross-cultural: transferable between contexts
 - + In part because of the accepted disjuncture between the storyworld and any claims to historical reality
- ✗ Much effort made at tale collection to try and establish “original”

TALE (CONT.)

- ✕ Tale-type Index
- ✕ Motif Index
- ✕ Structural analysis / morphology
- ✕ Finally, a re-examination of the tales in particular contexts
 - + Tales are told for a specific purpose, and adapted to make things new

LEGEND

- ✗ Contestable truth claims
- ✗ Made in private
- ✗ More formless than other genres
 - + Lacking a clear distinction between teller and audience
 - + Lacking a clear cut beginning middle end
 - + Left unresolved – resolution left to the performance participants
- ✗ Often simply metonymic

Barbara Allen

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE NARRATIVES

FIRST-PERSON NARRATIVES

- ✗ Can not (almost by definition) be “traditional” with respect to content
 - + Save for when a narrator takes a narrative and puts it into the first person
- ✗ Nevertheless, use the collective grammar of storytelling, the understanding of the context and group aesthetics, and for the same purpose as “traditional” narratives
- ✗ Communication of experience

“PERSONAL EXPERIENCE NARRATIVES”

- ✗ PENs are
 - + Carefully shaped and precisely positioned for rhetorical effect in their conversational settings
 - + The meaning of and PEN derives in large part from its use in a particular interactional matrix
- ✗ “Strategies for the encompassing of situations”
- ✗ Often “Second stories”
 - + One’s which follow up on and in response to other stories
- ✗ Telling the “right” story expresses an understanding of the social situation

PEN (CONT.)

- ✖ Teller selects from a continuum of experience one occurrence that seems characterizable in narrative form
- ✖ Selects an experience that is appropriate to the conversation
- ✖ Correlates the role s/he plays in story according to a desire to express solidarity with, or opposition to, other speakers
- ✖ Omits and emphasises details to highlight the story's pertinence and appropriateness

PEN (CONT.)

- ✖ Shapes the story so that the meaning of the experience for the teller is clear to the audience
- ✖ Emphasis on new stories (to fixed audience groups)
- ✖ However, shared stories become the repertoire of the group
- ✖ “Kernel narratives”

Barre Toelken

BALLAD AND FOLKSONG

SONG AND FOLKSONG

✕ Song

- + Musical and poetic expression of feelings or ideas

✕ *Folksong*:

- + Song passed along, rephrased, or used by others for whom it also functions as a way of articulating shared attitudes or feelings
- + Typically loses a direct connection with its maker
- + “Becomes the ward of those who sing it”

SONG AND FOLKSONG (CONT.)

- ✗ Adapted to fit expectations of the group
- ✗ Not “memorised” but “recomposed”
 - + Allows for individual interpretation
 - + Allows for variation, addition, contraction
 - + Allows for idiosyncratic performance
 - + Allows for temporary rights to performance

VARIATION

- ✗ Songs some in group performance tend to be stable
- ✗ Songs sung solo tend to vary
 - + But, songs that rely on wordplay (obscene songs, etc.) require a certain invariance

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXTS

- ✘ Professionalization of music means most song exposure does not emerge from intimate contexts but from strangers
- ✘ Mass-production implies less variance from performance to performance (including, of course, the invariance of the record)
- ✘ BUT, there has always been blend between folk and popular music

FOLK, POPULAR, AND ELITE CULTURE

- ✗ We tend to distinguish these three as absolutes
- ✗ There is always interchange between them
- ✗ Especially as
 - + Popular turns to folk for untapped marketable forms
 - + Elite turns to folk for nationalistic impulses

DISTINCTIONS

- ✕ Distinguished by manner of support
 - + Folk: supported by audience and performers themselves
 - + Popular: supported by market
 - + Elite: supported by patronage
- ✕ Distinguished by aesthetic:
 - + Folk: vernacular expectations for performance
 - + Popular: fashionable (hegemonic) expectations
 - + Elite: appeal to eternal realities, critical apparatus

DISTINCTIONS (CONT.)

- ✖ Distinguished by permanence of performance
 - + Folk: ephemeral
 - + Popular: transient
 - + Elite: considered permanent achievement
- ✖ Distinguished by perceived time-depth
 - + Folk: “traditional”
 - + Popular: “contemporary”
 - + Elite: “eternal”

DISTINCTIONS (CONT.)

- ✗ Distinguished by audience/performer distance
 - + Folk: notional, immediate
 - + Popular: mediated, spatio-temporal
 - + Elite: immediate, highly structured division
- ✗ Nevertheless, there is fluid motion between them
 - + What is folk can enter the popular, can be enshrined by protected by patrons
 - + Similarly, what is popular or elite can be absorbed by folk as part of their intragroup communication

John Barnie

ORAL FORMULAS IN THE COUNTRY BLUES

THE QUESTION

- ✗ Blues songs often sound “similar” but not identical to each other
- ✗ A particular blues player sometimes has a seemingly endless repertoire
- ✗ The same player’s “compositions” can vary greatly from performance to performance
- ✗ What’s up with that?

SUGGESTION: ORAL FORMULAIC THEORY

- ✗ (As discussed last class briefly)
- ✗ Has its origins in studies of epic poetry
- ✗ That question: how did bards remember 10-20,000 line poems?
 - + Ethnographic studies of contemporary bards in Yugoslavia / Macedonia
 - + Descendents of Homeric bards

ORAL FORMULAIC THEORY

- ✗ Verse is not “remembered” so much as “recomposed”
 - + “Spontaneous composition”
- ✗ Bards have a large repertoire of “formulas”
 - + Formula – a fixed string of words expressing one idea in so many syllables (or pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables)
- ✗ This repertoire is finite
 - + One formula per idea per syllable cluster

ORAL FORMULAIC THEORY (CONT.)

- ✗ Verse is a structured form:
 - + A fixed number of beats in a line
 - + (A fixed number of lines in a stanza)
 - ✗ May also have rhyme / rhyme scheme
- ✗ The form of the verse itself is “traditional,” irrespective of the plot the bard that might be performing
 - + Again, demonstrates a conservative (unchanging) / dynamic (adapting) tension

BLUES

- ✗ Bernie suggests the basic unit of the blues is not the stanza but the half-line
- ✗ Basic blues: AAB (12-bar)
 - + I [half-line] | [half-line]
 - + IV [half-line] | I [half-line] (which is a repetition, more or less, of the line prior)
 - + V [half-line] | IV→I [half-line]
 - ✗ Each half-line is two bars long
 - + Other variations include ABB, ABA, AAR (where R is a refrain, a line repeated from stanza to stanza)
- ✗ 16-bar: AAAB, AABB, ABAB, AABR, etc.

HALF-LINE THUS THE PLACE FOR FORMULAS

- ✕ 20 examples from Michael Taft
 - + “human have the blues”
 - + “human come to some place”
 - + “human go way from some place”
 - + “human got/have +human”
 - + “human leave/quit +human”
 - + “human love +human”
 - + ”human speak to +human”

MORE EXAMPLES

- + “human treat +human in some manner”
- + “some thing worry +human”
- + “+human have the blues”
- + “+human cry”
- + “human do unspecified action”
- + “human go someplace”
- + “human gone”
- + “human come home”

MORE EXAMPLES

- + “time won’t be long”
- + “human have something on human’s mind”
- + “human treat +human right”
- + “human wake up”
- + “human leave town”
- ✗ A tradition of themes

Frank de Caro

RIDDLES AND PROVERBS

RIDDLES

- ✖ A form of verbal contest
- ✖ A cryptic and metaphorical description performed by a teller which the listener is encouraged / required to interpret correctly
- ✖ A verbal genre which consists of a question or implied question and an answer to that question

RIDDLES (CONT.)

- ✖ A verbal expression containing one or more descriptive elements, a pair of which may be in opposition to each other; the referent of the elements is to be guessed; the descriptive element consists of both a *topic* and a *comment*
 - + Topic – the basic object being described
 - + Comment – modifies and expands by giving more description
 - + “Topic” is not the ‘real referent’ – the answer is ‘something like’ but expressly ‘not’ the topic

RIDDLES (CONT.)

- ✖ Typically rely on metaphor: a poetic comparison between two seemingly dissimilar objects
- ✖ Sometimes on wordplay / double entendre
 - + Pretended obscene riddles
- ✖ Sometimes on homonyms / homophones
 - + “What is black and white and red/read all over?”

FUNCTIONS AND CONTEXTS

- ✕ Riddles are good examples of a “minor genre” in both senses of the word
 - + They are small units, as opposed to larger verbal forms (myth, tale, legend, ballad)
 - + They have been somewhat marginalised and are considered the domain of children and/or “less-developed” societies

FUNCTIONS AND CONTEXTS (CONT.)

✕ Riddling falls into six (seven?) broad situational areas:

- 1) Leisure-time (for entertainment)
- 2) Riddling in folk narratives
- 3) Use as a kind of greeting formula
- 4) In educational contexts
- 5) In courtship
- 6) In ritual, especially initiation or death
- 7) (not listed by de Caro but stated) as a verbal duel

APPEAL

- ✖ Allow for the opportunity to “play” with established categories of the society
- ✖ Riddles “make sense,” but only in retrospect: the answer either makes a congruity between the seemingly incongruous or is a logical albeit unanticipated outcome

APPEAL (CONT.)

- ✖ Metaphor, wordplay, and verbal manipulation are *transgressive* as they demonstrate the (somewhat) arbitrary nature of culturally established categories
- ✖ Ultimately, demonstrate the ability to transcend these categories, that they are imperfect, and thus flexibility and imagination is possible

PROVERBS

- ✗ Often employs metaphor in a similar way
 - + No one cares about proper glass-house habitation
- ✗ “Conventionalised wisdom”
- ✗ A traditional expression that is meant to contain a truth
- ✗ A group will have a shared repertoire of proverbs, from which one is drawn for its appropriateness to a given situation
 - + A differing proverb can also be employed for a counter-opinion

PROVERBS (CONT.)

- ✗ With their employment, the situation is interpreted not by the teller, but by the “tradition” *through* the teller
- ✗ Conveys a culturally agreed-upon idea which can be used to make a point that may only be made less succinctly and perhaps less clearly and effectively in a speaker’s own words.”
- ✗ Depersonalises a situation by appealing to traditional precedents.
 - + Law

Elliott Oring

TOTEMISM AND THE A.E.F. REVISITED

TOTEMISM

- ✗ Orig.: a set of beliefs

- + The belief that members of kinship groups are related to and descended from a particular species of plant or animal or class of natural objects
- + Proscription against killing, eating, or harming one's totem species
- + Use of that species as emblematic symbol for the group
- + Ritual focused towards the totem

- ✗ Now, not a set of beliefs but a process of mind:

- + The process of classifying social groups in terms of objects in the natural world
- + Relations: metaphor, metonym, (related to Frazer's sympathetic magic)

AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

- ✖ Comprised of a variety of state regiments, with a number of differently coloured emblems
- ✖ Together, formed a “rainbow”
- ✖ “Rainbow” became nickname, then unofficial emblem, then emblem of the AEF.
- ✖ Rainbows became auspicious signs → rainbows were understood to be always present

ORING'S POINT

- ✘ The rainbow phenomenon was described as totemic by Linton (1924)
- ✘ Then cited by Levi-Strauss as evidence of American indifference to the complexity of totemism
- ✘ Now, return to it and more recent phenomena through the “process of mind” formulation

THE MONGOOSE AND THE AIRFORCE PARA-RESCUE SQUADRON

- ✖ Spotted on patrol successfully vanquishing a snake, claim was made it turned the tide of battle, brought back to camp
- ✖ Idea dismissed but difficult to shake
- ✖ Became “mascot”
- ✖ Brought on subsequent patrol and helped spot an ambush

(CONT.)

- ✖ Came to be seen as indicator/prognosticator of battle outcome
 - + “Mystical” relationship between group and mongoose
- ✖ Mongoose became emblem of group
 - + Truck-decoration, tattoos
- ✖ Referred to by other squadrons as “Mongoose”
- ✖ Similar to AEF phenomenon

BRUCE THE SKULL

- ✗ Different platoon had unburied a skull (common souvenir)
- ✗ Became joint property, wore hat and sunglasses, placed on stick
- ✗ Served as base-camp marker
- ✗ Carried during non-combat troop movements like processional object
- ✗ Brought out at parties, appeared in group photos
- ✗ Platoon was expressively antagonistic to all but other combat troops
 - + Inverted “peace” language of the era

MONGOOSE AND SKULL

- ✖ Differ in relationship to respective squads
 - + Former seen as being in mystical relationship
 - + Latter seen as member of platoon
- ✖ But both emblems to represent the entire group

MONGOOSE

- ✗ Starts as simile during skirmish
 - + Squad : enemy :: mongoose : snake
- ✗ Subsequent utility cements relationship irrespective of original association
 - + Squad *is* mongoose

SKULL

- ✖ Already has “ritual value” (extant symbol)
 - + Accounts in part for its desirability as souvenir by soldiers
- ✖ Explicit contrast between platoon and non-combatants / rear-guard
 - + REMPS : platoon :: living : dead
- ✖ Associative value is ongoing

PARALLELS

- ✖ High school / university mascots
- ✖ National emblems (Bald Eagle, Bear, Tiger, Beaver)
- ✖ Family crests / coats of arms
- ✖ All a metaphoric relationship that parallels the group in relation to the world with the totemic creature in relationship with its world
- ✖ (Which is why we study it in a section on proverbs)

Simon J. Bronner

FOLK OBJECTS

HIS POINT

- ✗ Folk objects are the same as other aspects of folklore
 - + Each “performance” is distinct
 - + They tend to follow patterns established within the group (type)
 - + But they adapt to the specific instance of performance (version)
- ✗ But they differ in one critical way
 - + Which is...?

THEY ARE “THINGS”

- ✗ Verbal art, custom, ritual are *ephemeral*
 - + They exist only at the moment of performance – the moment of their creation – and then are gone (save for recordings)
- ✗ Folk objects, because they have substance, because they are constructed from matter, have permanence
 - + They exist long after the moment of their creation
 - ✗ (There is a caveat, that we need to return to)

TANGIBLE

- ✕ They are able to be touched, measured, evaluated quantitatively
 - + “Words may change radically from one tale version to the next, and the other versions are irretrievable. To change an object, the maker must create a new object or significantly alter an existing one. The older ones remain for us to see and to conceptualise as some kind of series.”

OBJECTS ARE “OBJECTIVE”

- ✗ Objects are created by humans but once created, they stand apart
- ✗ Objects claim an historical character because they endure
- ✗ Since *folk* objects commonly have to do with everyday life (shelter, work, prayer, play) they help us to re-experience something of that everyday past.
 - + Think Louisbourg and the display of objects pertaining to everyday life

OBJECTS OFTEN HAVE AESTHETIC VALUE

- ✖ They typically serve utilitarian needs, but once those needs are met they may also be formed in a manner that is culturally pleasing
 - + Clothing allows for modesty and protection from the elements, but is designed and shaped – and selected – for aesthetic and/or symbolic reasons
 - + House paint protects building surfaces, but the colours chosen are based (mostly) on aesthetics

OBJECTS REQUIRE SKILL TO CREATE

- ✗ The techniques for their creation are often learned in face-to-face or apprenticeship interactions
- ✗ Objects are the opportunity to display those skills
- ✗ There is a connection between the maker and the object

OBJECTS ARE CONSTRUCTED FROM THE FOUND ENVIRONMENT

- ✗ Local materials – woods, rocks, etc.
- ✗ Immigrant populations might apply imported techniques / an imported aesthetic sense to newly encountered materials
- ✗ “Found environment” extends beyond the natural world, to include industrial materials available to the object-maker
 - + Steel, plastic, sheet paper, etc.

OLD TECHNIQUES CAN BE EMPLOYED FOR NEW OBJECTS

- ✖ The skills required to create one set of objects can be adapted to new sets
 - + Cf. Mi'kmaq basketry
 - + Cheticamp hooked rugs
- ✖ Both use traditional techniques to create objects for trade, meeting the needs / expectations of markets
 - + New basket shapes / purposes
 - + New rug designs

OBJECTS CAN BE TRADITIONAL IN THEIR USE IF NOT THEIR CREATION

- ✗ Much like makers can use industrial materials, users can use mass-produced objects in traditional ways
 - + Company houses adapted / renovated to meet cultural expectations of “house”
 - + A table is laid using cutlery, placemats, tablecloths not necessarily of the owner’s manufacture
 - + What you are currently wearing expresses some form of identity, despite none of it (likely) being of your own manufacture

“CRAFT” VS. “ART”

- ✖ One possible way to distinguish between craft and art is how much “need” is the central motivator for an object’s creation vs. how much is “aesthetics”
- ✖ Once, making these objects was necessary for everyday living. When equally useful objects are available otherwise, their ongoing creation / use is deliberate, either as a display of skill or as a display of traditional identity

WHAT'S MISSING FROM BRONNER?

THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF WOMEN

- ✗ Often created from less enduring materials (e.g. fabric)
- ✗ Often created to be destroyed / consumed / dismantled immediately thereafter
 - + Food; a laid table; laundry hung on a line; etc.
- ✗ Mis- / under-representation of women as material culture producers in museums, etc.
 - + And conspicuously quiet in Bronner

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett

OBJECTS OF MEMORY

HER POINT

- ✖ Certain actions elicit memories of previous performances and experiences of those actions, connecting the distance in time and space
 - + She gives the example of *kaddish* (the ritual prayer of mourning for a departed parent)
- ✖ An object can operate in the same way
- ✖ Folklorists have paid attention to objects in terms of their production, but less so in terms of how they are saved, collected, and arranged in ways found meaningful to their owner

“MATERIAL CULTURE AS LIFE REVIEW”

- ✗ Far from exclusively, but particularly and intensively among the elderly, objects serve as means of organising one’s life experiences
 - + They become opportunities for narrative
 - + They become tangible connections with the / a / their past
 - ✗ (She doesn’t discuss sympathetic magic, but it works here)
- ✗ She suggests a taxonomy of these objects

MATERIAL COMPANION

- ✖ An object which has aged along with its owner
- ✖ Typically not tied to one specific episode but with an extended period of time
- ✖ Valued for its continuity
 - + Such objects are not “saved”; they are allowed to grow old and, however humble, they accumulate meaning and value by sheer dint of their constancy in a life.
- ✖ Often a functional object, which provides denotative / connotative associations with that person's occupation
- ✖ Her example: wooden cooking spoon

SOUVENIRS AND MEMENTOS

✕ *A little unclear on the distinction, but I have always interpreted the difference as...*

- ✕ Souvenir: reminder of an ephemeral experience
- ✕ Memento: reminder of an absent person
- ✕ The value of the object is connotative, providing a connection between the ephemeral or the absent and the present
 - + Think of items on mantle-pieces, dressing tables, in scrapbooks, etc
- ✕ Typically saved from moment of experience with for the express purpose of serving as object of memory

MEMORY OBJECT

- ✕ *Why she didn't use a different term considering her calling everything "objects of memory" I do not know, but...*
- ✕ A constructed object that gives memory a material form
- ✕ Life paintings, embroidery, memoir
- ✕ BKG's own father did this upon his retirement
 - + <http://www.museumoffamilyhistory.com/ce/kirshenblatt/kirshenblatt-main.htm>
- ✕ They tend to be less autobiography as ethnography
 - + They reflect life witnessed by the artist, not necessarily with artist as protagonist

COLLECTABLES

- ✖ The act of collecting is future-oriented, including as it does the possibility of further collecting
- ✖ The criteria for what constitutes collectability is at the discretion of the collector
- ✖ Have a life prior to entering into the world of the collector
- ✖ Are partially, if not wholly, removed from their original context to create new meaning

ENSEMBLES

- ✕ The assembly of objects (whether of similar kind or not) into some form of unified whole
- ✕ Meaning in the individual objects, in their juxtaposition with other objects, and in their inclusion into a larger piece
 - + Individual objects may be meaningful but not “displayable” – scraps of fabric, etc.
- ✕ Quintessential example: the memory quilt

MINIATURE

- ✗ Representational object, substitution for uncollectible
 - + “Economy of scale”
- ✗ Exercise of control not (often) attainable in real world
- ✗ Hermetic, idealised
 - + Often removed in time, evocative of an eclipsed past
- ✗ Application of skill in aid of memory, art, and leisure design where once was (or might have been) for work

CONCLUSIONS

- ✘ Objects of memory, in whatever form they take, are “conversation pieces”
- ✘ They allow for not only personal reminders but for the communication of those memories to third parties
- ✘ They personalise a space by materialising the life experiences of that person through objects, that remain even in the person’s absence

EXTENDED EXAMPLE: BRODIE'S HOSPICE ROOM

- ✗ Actually a good example, and not just a blatant attempt to have you look up an old article of his.
- ✗ “The very environment militates against denial”: Negotiating Place Through Material Culture.
 - + *Ethnologies* 27.2 (2005): 189-217

William A. Wilson

DOCUMENTING FOLKLORE

FASCINATING, *FASCINATING* TRIVIA

- ✗ In years past I have tried teaching this much earlier in the semester (I think once the very first reading, and another time for the second week)
- ✗ Dilemma:
 - + You won't really get this until you have a grasp of "what folklore is"; but
 - + By the time you have a grasp of "what folklore is" this should all be familiar for you.
- ✗ Nevertheless: THIS IS A GOOD CHAPTER TO THINK ABOUT WHEN DOING YOUR ASSIGNMENTS

HIS POINT

- ✗ Folklore is not a set of items from a nostalgic past, but an ongoing process that exists among all groups
- ✗ It is esoteric, contingent, and contextual
 - + Esoteric: it belongs to the group
 - + Contingent: its potential performance is conditioned by a host of circumstances
 - + Contextual: its actual performance arises in relation to other events

DOCUMENTATION

- ✖ Folklorists, as a species, are still interested in “items”
- ✖ But we need the item to be put into the social and cultural context in order to better understand it
- ✖ Documentation is the act of providing the social and cultural context for an item, to make it relevant / accessible for future researchers

DOCUMENTATION IS IMPORTANT FOR TWO REASONS

- ✗ For the student:

- + without the exercise of collecting and then providing the information to make the item comprehensible, much of the concepts of folklore are abstract

- ✗ For the discipline as a whole:

- + items collected by students (and others) begin to form a critical mass of data upon which is the basis for the work of determining patterns, establishing histories, and developing theories

TRADITION-BEARER

- + A useful, albeit awkward term
- ✗ “Tradition” does not exist in and of itself, it is something deliberately passed along through communicative channels by actual people
- ✗ These people are the sources (informants, collaborators) that folklorists engage
- ✗ We can identify both *active* and *passive* tradition-bearers

TRADITION-BEARER (CONT.)

- ✗ Some groups have members with explicit responsibilities for tending to the tradition (elders, recognised practitioners of certain forms, etc.)
- ✗ Most groups have people who are actively engaged in enacting the tradition (e.g. women baking for the family, trappers, singers)
 - + Both of these are referred to as *active tradition bearers*
- ✗ Even people who do not enact the tradition, or no longer do so, or have yet to do so, may know it
 - + *Passive tradition bearers*

TRADITION-BEARER (CONT.)

- ✗ Generally, the more formal and/or established the sense of groupness, the more easily one can identify an *active* tradition bearer
 - + Family, ethnic group, occupation
 - ✗ Age and social status likely linked to tradition-bearer role
 - + Friendship groups
 - ✗ No one “leader” virtually everyone either active or passive

COLLECTING

- ✗ Ideally, always at the moment of performance: practically, one can “recreate” something like a natural context for performance
- ✗ Tools
 - + Verbal lore:
 - ✗ The interview
 - + Material lore:
 - ✗ The photograph
 - + Customary lore:
 - ✗ The ethnography (I guess the video camera too)

SOCIAL FUNCTION

- ✘ Why was this particular item employed? Why did it emerge at this moment of performance? What did it do?
- ✘ Sometimes it is implicit: sometimes it is not clear at all and requires follow-up
- ✘ The appropriateness (or inappropriateness) of an item at any given time is something that can be gleaned from performance context, audience reaction, your own personal reaction, etc.

CULTURAL BACKGROUND

- ✖ Why this form in the first place? How does this item enter the repertoire to be potentially something used at the moment of performance?
- ✖ Speaks a lot to the shared understanding of the group
- ✖ Also, required to explain the esoteric nature of some performances

Elliott Oring

DOCUMENTING FOLKLORE: THE ANNOTATION

HIS POINT

- ✗ Serves as the conclusion for both books
- ✗ Reaffirms that each performance is a unique occurrence,
 - + “Everything is utterly singular and new”
- ✗ Reaffirms that one can legitimately make comparisons between performances
 - + “Were it not for our categorizing and classifying propensities, we would be hopelessly overpowered by the relentless novelty of the world”

RELATIONS

- ✗ Categories make explicit the recognition of relations between these unique events
 - + Same, similar, or analogous **content**
 - + Same, similar, or analogous **form**
 - + Same, similar, or analogous **function**
 - + Same, similar, or analogous **group**
 - + Same, similar, or analogous **context**
 - ✗ *Etc.*
- ✗ Groups, genres, types are all manners in which we impose relations of similarity on unique performances

REMEMBER

- ✗ Early folklorists assumed a strict genetic relationship between occurrences
- ✗ The folk were a “faulty conduit”: variations were a consequence of mis-performance (or, charitably, necessary but unfortunate adaptations to new circumstances)
- ✗ The exercise of comparing versions was ultimately aimed at reconstructing “the original” (the Ur-form) that is related to and the basis for all

BUT NOW

- ✗ “The folk” understood not as faulty conduits but as deliberate re-interpreters who create new performances based in part on
 - + an understanding of the context of a specific performance,
 - + the understood shared repertoire of the group, and
 - + an understanding of the group’s sense of aesthetics
- + Relationships are historical, not genetic; intentional, not necessary; emic as much as they are etic

EMIC AND ETIC

- ✗ Have we covered emic and etic? Here they are:
- ✗ Terms derived from linguistics – phonemic and phonetic
 - + Phonetic spelling: spelled according to how the word objectively sounds
 - + Phonemic spelling: spelled according to the particular language's historical system of associating sounds with markings
- ✗ Phonemic: their there they're
- ✗ Phonetic: Θēr Θēr Θēr

EMIC AND ETIC

- ✖ Etic: the technical terms used to describe something; theoretical categories
- ✖ Emic: the “insider” terms used to describe something; vernacular categories
- ✖ (Much of our folklore theory was built on thinking European emic terms were in fact etic: that’s why we waffle over “what is a legend? questions?)

THREE BENEFITS TO ANNOTATION

- ✖ A buffer against parochialism
 - + You may be distinct, but you ain't all that unique
- ✖ Identifying socio-cultural change
 - + Provides the data for seeing how forms are adapted to new circumstances, ideologies, contexts
- ✖ Quantitative data for suggesting the sociological. psychological importance of themes and values
 - + (The rest of the chapter is interesting, but not to necessary to talk about)