

Introduction to Folklore II: Folk Genres and Analysis

2010-01-12 Evans-Pritchard's "The Portal Case"

FOLK AND FINA 113

THE PORTAL CASE:

- ✘ Authenticity, Tourism, Traditions, and the Law
 - + Deirdre Evans-Pritchard
- ✘ 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”?

AND NOW...

- ✘ ... we'll move over to Word to get your answers.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

- ✘ Identify something that, prior to this week, you might not have thought was a something a folklorist would study (or would want to study). Give details.
- ✘ Answer on the Facebook group: hurry up and join, those who have not.

GO AWAY FROM THIS PLACE

- ✘ Read “Ethnic Groups and Ethnic Folklore” by Elliott Oring (again), from the *Introduction*