



BAUMAN'S "THE LA HAVE GENERAL STORE"

FOLK 211 – Atlantic Canadian Folklore

2011-03-14

Three things

- Boy is fine
 - Had a fever, but is back to awesomeness
- But, I'm *still* behind in marking
 - Post-reading week submissions will REALLY REALLY HONESTLY be done by next class, including feedback on discussion leading.
- Does Allan want to add more from last class?
 - It was an awesome handout, but I don't want to give it short shrift



BAUMAN: WHAT DID *YOU* THINK?

... and how does Yu Du wish to proceed?



What's his point?

- Most of the “ethnography of speaking” research focuses on peoples where great value is placed on the “good talker”
 - With one sole example of a culture that places almost no value on it
- What about a middle-ground? Where there is a discrete time for talking and aesthetics are modest?



Back to LaHave

- (Same place as last week's Belsnickling article)
- The general store on the North end of Bell's Island
- Reached by rowing
- Central point for socialising even when shopping the primary activity
- Centre of social life on winter's nights



Economy

- Primarily inshore fishing, with others as “saltbankers” (fishing the Grand Banks) or “coasters” (trade ships to the Caribbean)
- Long days, sometimes away for months, during spring to fall
- (Virtually) nothing to do during winter



Talk at the store

- Male activity, young adult (Belsnickling age?) and up
- Greater status accorded with greater age
- Accompanied by card-playing

Three emic genres

- News, Yarns, and Arguments
- News:
 - Matters of general interest to the community (price of fish, local politics, health of community members)
 - Important, but limited
- Most time devoted to Yarns

Emic and Etic

From the distinctions between “phonemic” and “phonetic”

Phonetic – spelling based on “how it’s pronounced”
– based on objective criteria

Should → shud | Their, they’re, there → thair

Phonemic → how the group spells it, warts and all

Etic → understanding of an outsider; emic →
understanding of an insider

Etic conceptual, technical category of the discipline



Yarns

- Personal experience narratives
- Extraordinary / unusual circumstances encountered during time away from group
 - As employed as fishermen
 - Occasionally on solitary walks (limited to supernatural talk)
- Coasters and Saltbankers thought to have better stories
 - Experiences sufficiently different



Yarns (cont.)

- Yarns are means of organizing personal experience for presentation to others
- Expectation of “honesty,” as the account reaffirm patterns of fishermen identity (masculinity?) for each other.




Arguments

- Points of conflict
- However, never extended beyond the context of the argument performance itself
- Typically, a conflicting viewpoint would require a “yarn” to back it up



Aesthetics

- The shape of the event itself constitutes the aesthetic criterion for the ethnography of speaking
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Go away now

- For next class, Tallman's "You Can Almost See It"