

## Introduction to Graduate Study in Folklore

English 770.01  
08377-4  
Winter 2006  
MW 3:30-5:18  
Denney 207

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This course introduces major issues and approaches in the contemporary study of folklore, while also providing an overview of the canonical genres and some notion of the emergence and history of the discipline. It is divided into three parts. The first briefly explores the institutional and methodological foundations of folklore studies. The second introduces the holistic, ethnographic approach to folklore as the expressive economy of a community and reviews some of the canonical folklore genres in this framework. The third deals with conceptions of folklore as a distinctive sociocultural category: a specific form of communication or thought, a performance of differential identity, or a mode of cultural production.

### READINGS

#### At SBX:

Dundes, Alan ed. 1999. *International Folkloristics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

#### Through the library:

Falassi, Alessandro 1980. *Folklore by the Fireside: Text and Context of the Tuscan Veglia*. Austin: University of Texas Press. On reserve; used copies also widely available.

Other readings are mostly on online course reserve; *Journal of American Folklore* articles and some others are available on JSTOR through OSCAR.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading responses. By 10:00 PM before the day of each meeting, half of the class will post a response to the day's reading to the course listserv; the two halves of the class will alternate days through the quarter. Responses should not try to summarize readings, but to identify key points for the next day's discussion. 40%
2. A 10-page research paper. An exercise in interpreting texts, objects, or performances in context; we'll adjust the topic to your concerns. 40%
3. General participation. 20%

## PART I. A NOT-QUITE DISCIPLINARY TRADITION

Note re Part I: As members of this class, you have also become at least temporary members of the folklore village during one of its busier times of year. You will see the current state of folklore studies in action with two candidate talks and a visiting lecture. I expect these three talks to exemplify three longstanding traditions in folklore studies: comparative philology, community-based ethnography, and community advocacy. While we attend the guest talks during the regular course period, we will conduct discussion on the listserv.

### 1/4 A sketch of the social history of the discipline

**Read** Noyes, Dorothy 2004. "Folklore." In *The Social Science Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed. V.1, 375-378. Ed. Adam Kuper and Jessica Kuper. London and New York: Routledge.

Newell, William Wells 1888. "On the Field and Work of a Journal of American Folk-Lore." *Journal of American Folklore* 1:3-7.

Hymes, Dell 1975. "Folklore's Nature and the Sun's Myth." *Journal of American Folklore* 88:345-369.

Grimm and Thoms in Dundes, ed.

### 1/9 The philological tradition

**Talk** Merrill Kaplan, PhD Candidate in Scandinavian, UC Berkeley. "Entertaining Odin: Performing the Past in the King's Hall." **Denney 311.**

**Read** Krohn and von Sydow in Dundes ed.

Jakobson, Roman and Petr Bogatyrev 1987 (1929) "Folklore as a Specific Form of Creation." In Jakobson, Roman, *Language in Literature*. Cambridge MA: Harvard.

Urban, Greg 1999. "The Role of Comparison in the Light of the Theory of Culture." In John R. Bowen and Roger Peterson, eds. *Critical Comparisons in Politics and Culture*, pp.90-109. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

### 1/11 Ethnography and community

**Talk** Ray Cashman, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, U of Alabama. "Genre and Ideology in Northern Ireland." **Denney 311**

**Read** Falassi, pp.1-29.

Noyes, Dorothy 2003. "Group." In Burt Feintuch, ed. *Eight Words for the Study of Expressive Culture*, 7-41. Urbana: University of Illinois Press. 2003.

**1/16 NO CLASS—MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY**

**1/18 Folklore in public**

**Talk** Ruth Tompsett, Middlesex University, and Clary Salandy, Mahogany Arts.  
"Perspectives on London's Notting Hill Carnival." Roy Bowen Theatre, **Drake Union**,  
1849 Cannon Drive. **NOTE** distant location. The talks run 4:00-5:30; we will meet  
there at 3:30 in the upstairs lobby overlooking the river.

**Read** Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara 2001. "Folklorists in Public: Reflections on Cultural Brokerage in the United States and Germany." *Journal of Folklore Research* 37:1-21.

**1/23 Catch-up day: a synthesis of Part I**

## **PART II GENRES IN CONTEXT**

**1/25 The fairy tale: structure**

Falassi, pp. 29-72

Olrik and Propp in Dundes ed.

Holbek, "The Language of Fairy Tales." 1989. In Kvideland, Reimund, and Henning K. Sehmsdorf, eds. *Nordic Folklore: Recent Studies*, 40-62. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

**1/30 The fairy tale: storytellers and the real**

Sokolov and Delargy in Dundes ed.

"Barbarina," "The Cats Under the Sea," "The Gourd of Blood," and "The Three Brothers and the Fig Tree" 1985. In Mathias, Elizabeth, and Richard Raspa, eds. *Italian Folktales in America: The Verbal Art of an Immigrant Woman*. Detroit: Wayne

University Press.

"The Green Bird," "Giuseppinu," "The Virgin Mary's Child." 2004. In Zipes, Jack, ed./tr. *Beautiful Angiola: The Great Treasury of Sicilian Folk and Fairy Tales Collected by Laura Gonzenbach*. New York and London: Routledge.

Noyes, Dorothy 2005. "Buried Treasure or Fairytale Verismo? Framing Sicilian Women's Stories." *Marvels and Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies* (online) 19: 331-343.

**2/1 Triviality and resistance: women, children, play**

Falassi 73-104

Ramanujan, A.K. 1991. "Towards a Counter-System: Women's Tales." In Appadurai, Arjun, Frank Korom and Margaret Mills, eds. *Gender, Genre, and Power in South Asian Expressive Traditions*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Del Giudice, Luisa 1988. "Ninna-nanna nonsense? Fears, Dreams, and Falling in the Italian Lullaby." *Oral Tradition* 3: 270-293.

Leea Virtanen 1989. "The Function of Riddles." In Kvideland, Reimund, and Henning K. Sehmsdorf, eds. *Nordic Folklore: Recent Studies*, 221-231. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

**2/6 Folksong**

Falassi 105-143

Coffin, Tristram 1961. "Mary Hamilton." In Leach, MacEdward, and Tristram Coffin, eds. *The Critics and the Ballad*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press

Paredes, Américo 1993. "The Concept of the Emotional Core Applied to the Mexican Corrido 'Benjamín Argumedo.'" In *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border*, 143-176. Austin: University of Texas Press.

**2/8 "True" stories: legend, gossip, personal narrative,**

Falassi 145-170

Basso, Keith 1990. "Stalking with stories': Names, places, and moral narratives among the Western Apache." *Western Apache Language and Culture*, pp. 99-137. Tucson: University of Arizona Press.

Fine, Gary Alan. 1992. "The Kentucky Fried Rat: Legends and Modern Society." In *Manufacturing Tales*, ch. 6. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Turner, Patricia A. 1992. Ambivalent Patrons: The Role of Rumor and Contemporary Legends in African-American Consumer Decisions. " *Journal of American Folklore* (online) 105:424-441.

**2/13 Ritual and reproduction**

Falassi 171-203

Van Gennep in Dundes ed.

**2/15 Humor, obscenity, and criticism**

Falassi 205-246

Babcock, Barbara 1978. Introduction. In Barbara Babcock, ed. *The Reversible World*, pp.13-36. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.

Abrahams, Roger and Richard Bauman 1978. "Ranges of Festival Behavior." In Barbara Babcock, ed. *The Reversible World*, pp.193-208. Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press.

Oring, Elliot. 1987. "Jokes and the Discourse on Disaster" *Journal of American Folklore* (online) 100:276-286.

**PART III. THE FOLK AND ITS OTHERS**

**2/20 The folk from the nation-state to globalization**

Colovic, Ivan 2002. "Who Owns the Gusle? A Contribution to Research on the Political History of a Balkan Instrument." In Samir Resic and Barbara Törnquist-Plewa, eds. *The Balkans in Focus: Cultural Boundaries in Europe*. 59-81. Lund: Nordic Academic Press.

Anderson, Benedict 2000. "The Rooster's Egg." *New Left Review* 2d series, 2:47-62.

Noyes, Dorothy ed. 2005. *Folklore Abroad: The Diffusion and Revision of*

*Sociocultural Categories*. Special issue, *Indian Folklife* (Chennai) 4 (2). 2005. (read the five short articles) [[http://www.indianfolklore.org/publications\\_news\\_current.htm](http://www.indianfolklore.org/publications_news_current.htm)]

## **2/22 Lay experience**

Hufford, David 1995. The Experience-Centered Analysis of Belief Stories: A Haunting Example in Honor of Kenny Goldstein. In Roger D. Abrahams, ed. *Fields of Folklore*, pp. 55-89. Bloomington IN: Trickster Press.

Brady, Margaret K. 1987. "Transformations of Power: Mormon Women's Visionary Narratives." *Journal of American Folklore* (online)100: 461-468.

White, Luise 2005. "Social Construction and Social Consequences. Rumors and Evidence." In Gary Alan Fine, Véronique Campion-Vincent, Chip Heath, eds. *Rumor Mills. The Social Impact of Rumor and Legend*, 241-254. New Brunswick: Transaction.

Edwards, Lynda. 1997. "Myths Over Miami." *Miami New Times*, June 5 (distributed electronically).

## **2/27 Subalternity**

Gramsci in Dundes ed.

Portelli, Alessandro 1991. "Typology of Industrial Folksong." In *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories*, pp.161-192. Albany: SUNY Press.

Scott, James 1990. "Voice Under Domination: The Arts of Political Disguise." In *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*, 136-182. New Haven: Yale University Press.

## **3/1 Repression, desire, and return**

Mérimée, Prosper 1966. "Lokis." In *The Venus of Ille and Other Stories*, tr. Jean Kimber, 126-169. London: Oxford University Press.

Cantwell, Robert 1994 "Conjuring Culture: Ideology and Magic in the Festival of American Folklife." In Mary Hufford, ed. *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*, 167-183. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

## **3/6 Representation and recognition**

Jeggle, Utz and Gottfried Korff 1986. "On the Development of the Zillertal Regional Character: A Contribution to Cultural Economics." In James R. Dow and Hannjost Lixfeld, eds., *German Volkskunde*, pp. 124-139. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre 1990. The uses of "the people". In *In other words: essays towards a reflexive sociology*, tr. Matthew Adamson, pp.150-155. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Limón, José E. 1981. The Folk Performance of "Chicano" and the Cultural Limits of Political Ideology. In Richard Bauman and Roger D. Abrahams, eds. "*And Other Neighborly Names*": *Social Process and Cultural Image in Texas Folklore*, pp.197-225. Austin: University of Texas Press.

### **3/8 Representation continued**

Webber, Sabra J. 1991. "In Defense of (Maghribi) Folklore." *In Romancing the Real*, 195-226. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Fabian, Johannes 1999. "Remembering the Other: Knowledge and Recognition in the Exploration of Central Africa." *Critical Inquiry* 26: 49-69.