

EDITORIAL

"As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly," and although editors seem to keep returning to editorials for various reasons, we would like to think that **Forum's** efforts, ideas, decisions, and announcements have not been so vagarious. Since **Folklore Forum** has been through some changes in the past few years and because we want to outline some new directions for the journal, we are prompted to make some comments for this decade.

Forum was originally conceived in 1968 to fill a gap--there seemed to be a paucity of exchange of ideas on the graduate student level both within schools and between schools--it was to serve a communicatory function (Oring and Durham, 1968), to be an information base from which the students who were the building blocks of the future of the discipline could express their opinions, ideas, and suggestions.

Six years later **Forum** had tipped the scales in the opposite direction. The editors lamented the fact that a rigor mortis had set in: the scholarship was good, but "our ideas are often lost, overtaxed, go essentially unexpressed because alot of us just are not good enough paper writers yet (nor should all of us expect to be, yet)" (Gilmore, 1973), an idea that was echoed five years later in an editorial statement by Virginia Lowe.

In considering the future of **Forum** (Fall, 1978), Lowe re-emphasized the need "to make available a public arena for consideration of controversial ideas and approaches which concern the daily grind of taking classes and writing papers, theses, and dissertations, in short, the problems encountered in the general preparation for a career as a professional folklorist."

For the 1980s we will re-assert the original purpose(s) of **Forum**, even though the previous format has been the shape that **Forum** has taken due to reader reaction and trends of scholarly interest. We want to broaden our scope without relaxing our criteria for scholarship. We would then propose that interested readers and contributors offer "topics and comments" (e.g., descriptive pieces and in-progress reports on dissertation or other research), "bibliographic essays," and "notes and queries" (consider the manner in which the term "folk-lore" was first presented). In addi-

tion to these types of pieces, we would still encourage finished, scholarly papers and translations for publication.

One way we have begun to expand on the original purpose of the journal is by adding translations to our publication format. Against the background of a general malaise in the mastery Americans have of foreign languages, American folklorists with competency in languages other than English are an increasingly scarce breed. Though few, the translations which have appeared in **Forum**, many of which are by students, may do something toward taking up this slack. **Forum** is the only journal of its kind which regularly publishes translations, and we encourage both students and professionals to contribute translations of articles which they feel have significance to the field.

Looking at the attrition rate in the number of annual issues **Folklore Forum** has published each year in its eminent fourteen year history, one might think that we are approaching our last. We think not. **Forum** began with four and went the next year to six issues, put together in the well-nigh cut and paste tradition, and it has gradually become more refined in concept, production technique, and organization in ensuing years, thanks to the efforts of all of those students who worked on the journal's staff--and the far-sightedness of its founders. The first issue of 1981 marked the change from our output of three annual issues to two.

In the past three years our income from subscriptions and the sale of back issues has not met our production costs. We have been able to meet the difference only by organizing a series of yard sales at which we have foisted onto the public, at bargain prices, all the unwanted accumulation of the local folkloristic community. In addition, final issues of the year have tended to eat into the next year's budget, and a growing deficit has forced us to make some decisions. Faced with the choice of raising our rates to cover the production costs of three annual issues or maintaining our current rates which will cover the cost of two, we have opted for the latter course. We cannot promise, alas!, that in such inauspicious times as lie ahead of us we will not at some future date have to raise our rates.

With the introduction of a new editorial staff and a somewhat healthier financial prospect, we hope to get back

on schedule; at this time the first issue for 1982 as well as the preliminary work for a second issue, a special issue, are in progress.

In the fall of 1982 we will publish a special issue based on the Spring Lecture Series in the Folklore Department at Indiana University. The reasons for this issue are twofold: first, we want to periodically supplement our general format by publishing special issues; second, we felt it necessary to represent our loyalties and sentiments to Richard M. Dorson by dedicating an historically significant issue to his memory.

The death of Richard M. Dorson prompted the Spring Lecture Series. The theme for the series is "The Future of American Folklore," a theme not only of tremendous concern for all of us in folklore and neighboring disciplines, but very close to the heart and mind of Richard Dorson. It is an honor to have such notable scholars as Henry Glassie, Richard Bauman, Lynwood Montell, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Alan Jabbour, and Wayland Hand speak at Indiana University and contribute to this special issue of **Folklore Forum**.

We feel that this issue will be a unique document in that it will capture the thinking of these folklorists in both a synchronic and diachronic manner, and that it is a refreshing departure from our usual compilation of essays. We urge our readership to watch for the special issue and to pass the word to colleagues and students that it will, we plan, be available at the October 1982 AFS meeting.

Thank you for your support, and we stand ready to make this journal responsive to your communications.

Peter Voorheis, Co-editor, 1980

Jeanne Harrah and Thomas Walker, Co-editors, 1981

Sean Galvin, Editor, 1982