and the perceptions of the social use of space to create an altered social consciousness and worldview on the part of the residents of Hollybush. His argument is convincing, not only because both his architectural fieldwork and his oral history interviews are so thorough, but also — and mainly — because he integrates the oral historical and artifactual research and analysis. The results of this combination either reinforce or constructively modify the conclusions he might have reached using just one approach. Thus, he uses the two approaches so that they complement each other.

Martin's book makes the humanistic element emerge from the artifactual ruins in Hollybush. Where a typical material folk cultural approach might delineate the structural forms and development of the architectural types in the community, Martin enlivens the forms with the people who built and lived in them. He does this by including oral historical interviews with the people and their descendants. But, beyond this, he analyzes the material in the context of the larger regional and industrial societies that were beginning to transform the settlement. Martin thus goes beyond the disciplinary confines of either oral history or material culture, and derives new insights by combining the two fields in an exciting way.


Reviewed by Mary Beth Stein

Forty-five years after its original publication, the University of Tennessee Press has reissued *God Bless the Devil!,* a collection of liar's bench tales compiled and edited by the Tennessee Writer's Project in the 1930's. This recent republication, which coincides nicely with the Homecoming '86 celebration in Tennessee, has
been greatly enhanced by the addition of a thirty-page introduction by Charles Wolfe of Middle Tennessee State University.

As a facsimile edition, God Bless the Devil! remains what it was when it first appeared in 1940 - a collection of humorous anecdotes and colorful tales (regional, Black, and Melungeon) gathered from storytelling sessions on courthouse benches throughout the state of Tennessee. It is a collection which, while entertaining, is geared primarily toward the general reading public. The folklorist reading God Bless the Devil! will be frustrated by the lack of documentation on the informants, and place or date of collection.

Wolfe's introduction, however, lessens some of the frustration for the reader, as he provides a detailed history of the Tennessee Writer's Project, in which God Bless the Devil! becomes a document in the history of folklore practice. The introduction highlights some of the problems which confronted the Project in its efforts to collect and document the traditional culture of the state: questions concerning "authenticity"; instances of plagiarism (in which texts were taken and rewritten from books and newspapers); efforts to standardize and improve fieldwork methodology; attempts at genre clarification; and tensions between federal and state offices over philosophies of editorial practice.

Wolfe's description of the Tennessee Writer's Project examines the shaping influence of federal and state programs on folklore collection in the early decades of the twentieth century. Although the writers of the project and contributors in this volume were not professionally trained folklorists (they were, for the most part, free-lance writers or journalists), the project did not suffer from lack of scholarly guidance. John Lomax, George Pullen Jackson, Edwin C. Kirkland, and Benjamin Botkin numbered among those who were involved as advisors to the project.

It is difficult to imagine the twenty-five stories in God Bless the Devil! as oral texts; they are so polished one must assume that there has been considerable editing and rewriting. Despite Botkin's instructions to regional
staff writers to record the tales verbatim, Wolfe notes that Botkin applied a standard to manuscripts for publication which allowed for "improving" the text. It would be an interesting study of the relationship between the public programming and folklore collection to compare original sources with their published versions. However, as few of the original transcripts exist, the extent to which the texts had been improved cannot be ascertained. This apparent "inauthenticity" may cause folklorists today to raise the proverbial eyebrow; yet we should be reminded that the "touching up" of texts has a precedent in our discipline, dating as far back as Jakob and Wilhelm Grimm. As the 1985 meetings of the American Folklore Society revealed, the question of authenticity continues to be a central concern in contemporary folklore scholarship.

Wolfe offers perhaps the best evaluation of the volume when he writes, "...God Bless the Devil! should be seen as a project of its time. It was a time when traditional culture for public consumption was routinely mixed with journalism, local color fiction, 'fakelore,' and regional writing" (p.xxxiii). Although standards of folklore collection and publication have changed considerably in the past forty-five years, the republication of God Bless the Devil! assures the legacy of the Tennessee Writer's Project a significant place in the annals of folklore scholarship.


Reviewed by Kenneth D. Pimple

Professional training deprives us of a certain degree of pleasant naïveté. Compare the passages in Huckleberry Finn and Life on the Mississippi in which Mark Twain describes the great river. In the former book the river is beautiful and mysterious; in the latter every streak of light and ripple hides a snag waiting to sink the