culture (previously evident in some of his proverb scholarship) has found a further fruitful application in this volume. The appearance of Disenchantments is certainly a timely one and speaks to current interests in folklore-related processes outside performance in natural context.

Given the nature of this collection, Disenchantments lends itself marvelously to interdisciplinary use. The book would make excellent reading in a folklore and literature class, as the poems unabashedly acknowledge the ever present influence of folklore materials on individual literary creation. In a future reprinting of the volume, one might include a bibliography on Grimm scholarship to enhance the literary scholar's appreciation of folklorists' research. Educators in other disciplines might find Disenchantments appealing as well. Women's Studies instructors, in particular, will find a wealth of material addressing the social reality in which contemporary women find themselves. Finally, the book suggests interesting points of departure for poetry and creative writing classes, and prospective authors may find in it diverse and inspiring models for esthetic and personal expression.


Reviewed by John Wolford

In his 1970 publication The Saga of Coe Ridge, Lynwood Montell reconstructed the history of a small black community in southeastern Kentucky through oral history interviews and research of the scanty printed records which existed. He also examined the regional verbal folklore of the people to determine whether any historical data could be identified in it. In Kettle Creek he follows the same method of combining oral history and folklore to examine an altered - but continuing - traditional region, that of the Upper Cumberland in southeastern Kentucky and northeastern Tennessee.
In *Kettle Creek*, Montell expands his scope from the community study of his earlier book to examine a multi-county, two-state region which is defined by the people's reliance on and relation to the upper reaches of the Cumberland River. The focus of the book is on the economic and occupational lives of the people, notably logging, rafting, and steamboating on the river (Chapters 3 and 4). The first two chapters examine the opening of the Cumberland frontier, the establishment of an agricultural lifestyle, and the explosive emergence of the Civil War. We see how the war disrupted the economic and occupational lives of the residents of the area, so that they began to rely increasingly on the river for their livelihood. In the last chapter, Montell synthesizes and analyzes all the folkloric and historical data of the previous chapters and presents a model of change based on the regional, sociocultural, and historical contexts.

The book is clearly written, and the material is presented in a very neat, causal, diachronic format, in the style which is characteristic of Montell's published work. These traits make his writing a pleasure to read. As the jacket notes, however, this book should appeal not only to academic specialists in folklore, history, cultural geography, sociology, anthropology, (and, I would add, oral history), but also to "general readers, not only residents of the Upper Cumberland region but readers everywhere" who are interested in social history. One does wonder, however, who Montell's intended audience is. The scholarly spadework is impressive, with approximately 115 people interviewed. The three appendices, notes, bibliography, index, map, and illustrations all indicate the thoroughness of his research, and will be appreciated by his scholarly audience.

The frustrating aspect of *Kettle Creek*, however, is its emphasis on description rather than analysis. Presumably this descriptive style derives from Montell's desire to make the material accessible to a broader audience. I am not arguing for a suffusion of jargon and obscurantist theoretical ramblings into the book, but I do feel that the relative proportions of descrip-
tion in it should be reversed. A constant criticism of oral history publications is that they are too 'soft' and lacking in substance. If oral historians - and folklorists - insist upon providing only local color, on not revealing anything new, and on being atheoretical, than they must be content to have the people and the data they deal with considered insignificant.

My second criticism of *Kettle Creek* is that it is an incomplete description. By focussing heavily on the occupational and economic life of the region, Montell necessarily ignores large segments of the people's lives. Recreation, childhood experiences, family life, religion, education, courtship, weddings, funerals, and so on, are included only when they touch upon his larger focus. As a result, the reader does not receive an insider's sense of the everyday life in the Upper Cumberland. Instead, one receives wonderfully portrayed glimpses into aspects of the white male lives in the region.

Montell has produced a book that serves his purpose to "reconstruct the history of a river region as it is perceived from the vernacular point of view" (p. 1), as well as being acceptable to both scholars and general readers. However, the book could have served his purposes better if the reconstruction was less narrow in focus. 'Vernacular,' in this context, would have to refer to a white, male, emic perspective, a perspective that skews the holistic reality. Had he combined ethnographic method and analysis with his oral historical and folkloristic approach, Montell would have produced a far more substantial book.

Many of the criticisms in this review should be seen more as methodological or theoretical pleas for oral history studies than as a negation of the value of *Kettle Creek*. Oral history needs to prove itself in the academic world by producing critical and analytic works, works that not only add to their own field but also increase knowledge in other fields. *Kettle Creek* does add ethnographic data to the academic referential corpus, and does so in a pleasing and readable manner. More work needs to be done in the Upper Cumberland, however, before a full understanding of the region can be gained.