demonstrating exemplary technique, may be common to newcomers in folkloristics. Nevertheless, this sentence is a stance which no contemporary folklorist would choose to defend.


Reviewed by Barbara Truesdell

At the Conference on Contemporary Legend held in Sheffield, England, in 1982, folklorists shared insights, reevaluated established ideas, and explored new facets of legend study. The book *Perspectives on Contemporary Legend*, a collection of the conference's papers, allows readers to participate in the intellectual concerns shared at Sheffield. Three major foci emerge in this collection: the connection of a specific contemporary legend to earlier themes and motifs, the uses and meanings of legends to the group perpetuating them, and the problems and applications of analysis in legend study.

Bringing the contemporary legend out of its artificial isolation as a wholly modern phenomenon gives the researcher insights into legend adaptation and meaning. Three papers in this volume focused on placing modern legend in its historical and generic context. Gillian Bennett's paper, "The Phantom Hitchhiker: Neither Modern, Urban Nor Legend?," places this legend into a continuum with older ghostlore of similar theme, relating its features to changes in beliefs about ghoulish behavior and attendant changes in the story's internal logic to shape its present form. Jan Harold Brunvand's article,
"The Gagging Doberman--A New Urban Legend," examines its motifs and themes in historical and social context, positing an English origin to the modern legend from media documentation. In his paper, "Continuity and Change in Legendry: Two Mexican-American examples," Mark Glazer traces "La Muerte" and "The Devil in the Disco" from earlier Hispanic and Indian legends, attributing their thematic continuity to basic, stable values which they express for their folk group.

The prominent theme in those papers dealing with legend and its uses for the group was legend's relation to identity, defining the group in contrast to an exoteric group or by the esoteric group's own attributes. Linda M. Ballard's paper, "Tales of the Troubles," insightfully examines this emic/etic model of legend which shapes group perceptions and behavior in Ulster. "Belief and Disbelief: An Examination of Reactions to the Presentation of Rumour Legends," by Georgina Boyes, studies cultural context and the structure of processes validating belief in a thoroughly documented example from Nonconformists in England in 1860. Bengt af Klintberg's paper, "Why Are There So Many Modern Legends About Revenge?," seeks a socially acceptable outlet for socially unacceptable, vengeful feelings towards another group in the choice of antagonists and means of punishment in modern legends. David Buchan's paper, "Modern Tradition and the Rolls-Royce," argues plausibly for the car's use as a symbol of the British as a national group, but his adoption of the term "myth" for this use is less plausible. Ervin Beck's article, "Occupational Identity and Legend Decline: The Meat That Never Spoils," traces several legends about pieces of meat preserved by English butchers, relating their decline to the changing nature of that occupational group.

Challenges in the application of analysis to
text—such as means of transmission, structural elements, and influences on the audience—were central considerations in four papers. Sylvia Grider’s article, "The Razor Blades in the Apples Syndrome," explores the reciprocal influence of oral transmission and the media in circulating this legend, the intrusion of actual crime into the legend scenario, and the legend’s influence on the celebration of Halloween. J. Russel Reaver’s paper, "From Rhema to Logos: Contemporary Florida Legends," provides an interesting selection of that state’s local migratory legends in tracing levels of "embroidered" reality from seeming personal experience to near-mythical narratives, although more elucidation on the quality of belief at these various levels was needed. "The Tale of the Turkey Neck: A Legend Case Study," by Gordon McCulloch, is a structuralist examination of "flight distance" (i.e., the distance in acquaintance from protagonist to teller), the etiological core of its variants, and its lexical density. "On the Receiving End: When Legend Becomes Rumour," by Paul Smith, is an in-depth study of the repercussions on individuals and institutions when the legend "The Kentucky Fried Mouse" becomes attached to a specific shop in Sheffield.

Three other papers addressed problems in contemporary legend analysis on a more general level, without reference to specific texts. Stanley L. Robe’s paper, "Legends in a Culturally Complex Border Area," provides an overview of challenges facing folklorists in the south-western United States, an area of increasing interest to legend scholars and one in which more study is needed of the cultural influences meeting there. "Problems in Defining Contemporary Legend," by Noel Williams, sketches the continuing debate on definition and a partial characterizing of the genre, addressing textual, thematic, and contextual concerns. W.H.F.
Nicolaisen's article, "Legends as Narrative Response," recalls scholarly attention to the fact that a legend is a narrative, deserving the same rigorous analytical approach as other narrative forms. Despite claims of its formlessness, the legend's "truth" and its survival into modern times are dependent on understanding it as narrative.

*Perspectives on Contemporary Legend* is a fascinating cross-section of current research interests in contemporary legend scholarship. As such, it is a valuable contribution to this field's burgeoning vitality. The papers reproduced here in full, as well as the appendix of abstracts of papers not received in time for publication, will provide readers with many insights and questions for research, discussion, and quiet pondering.

*Sing the Cows Home: A Folklore Field Study of the Swedish Fåbod.* By Kerstin Brashers.
La Mesa, CA: Associated Creative Writers, 1983. Pp. 248, introduction, drawings, maps, list of references. $10.00 paper.

Reviewed by W. K. McNeil.

In the northern Swedish province of Dalarna, in times past, a summer dairy farm system developed in response to economic conditions. Constructed at selected sites on mountain slopes or hilltops, these summer farms consisted of living quarters for a herder and cattle. Such settlements were called fåbod, a term made up of the Swedish words "fä" (animals) and "bod" (building). It is the life on these farms that is the subject of *Sing the Cows Home.* The author, Kerstin Brashers, made at least two field trips, one in 1976 and one in 1980, to the province of Dalarna to interview former herders and others familiar with the fåbod. In addition,