

whose mark on American folklife research cannot be overestimated. It is also a testimonial to a leader in the establishing of folklife studies in the United States and one who has been a constant source of inspiration to others over a period of decades.

Richard E. Meyer, ed. **Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture.** Foreword by James Deetz. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1989. Pp. xiv + 347, photographs, illustrations, bibliography, index. \$44.95 cloth.

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The study of cemeteries and gravemarkers in the United States and the relationship of these artifacts to their American cultural contexts was the impetus behind the formation of the Association for Gravestone Studies (AGS) in 1977. Since that time, members of the AGS, both academic and nonacademic, have met annually to present papers, tour cemeteries, and engage in meaningful dialogue about the importance of these artifacts as an index of cultural attitudes, values, and beliefs. The inspiration for this kind of study comes from the pioneering work of Harriette Merrifield Forbes in the early part of the century, whose *Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them, 1653-1800* (1927), has become a classic.

One of the problems of the AGS was that it met and continues to meet exclusively in the northeastern region of the country, glorifying the *older*, more *authentic* gravestones of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New England and Pennsylvania. An appendage to the AGS meetings provided a solution to AGS exclusivity—the establishment of the permanent Cemeteries and Gravestones section of the American Culture Association (ACA) by Richard Meyer. Unlike the AGS, the Cemeteries and Gravestones section of the ACA included a wide range of material from various parts of the country.

Richard Meyer's book, *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers: Voices of American Culture*, perpetuates the serious study done by his predecessors. *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers* contains twelve essays by leading scholars in the field of cemetery studies who presented papers at the 1986 meetings of the ACA. In his introduction, Meyer reviews the available literature on cemetery studies, pointing out the overemphasis of the older New England materials and the neglect of newer and more contemporary materials from other regions of the country. Meyer consciously chose to include essays representative of American pluralism. There are essays on gravemarkers from the Pacific northwest, Upland south, Carolina Piedmont, New Orleans, Afro-American markers in Rhode Island, Zuni, Mormon, and Navajo cemeteries in New Mexico, western Pennsylvania cemeteries, and a Mexican-American community in Texas.

Diversity of region is not the only strength of this book. The essays contained in *Cemeteries* also demonstrate a variety of approaches, some focusing

on cemetery design and architecture, others on symbolic placement of markers or the origin and evolution of cemeteries. Other essays focus specifically on gravemarker aesthetics, that is, decorative aspects, symbolic significance, social and cultural meaning of epitaphs, artistic influences on stonecarvers, and the particular materials used in the art of stonecarving. Still other essays deal with worldview in funerary ritual, ethnicity and cultural identity, and economic dimensions of stonecarving. *Cemeteries* concludes with a very thorough bibliography of sources in cemetery studies. It is organized topically and contains citations that are interdisciplinary in scope and scholarly in nature.

Perhaps the only shortcoming of this book is its cost; however, the numerous photographs and illustrations complementing the essays in this book, and the fact that the book is printed on very high quality paper, more than compensate for the price. Folklorists will benefit greatly by the scholarly breadth and cultural diversity of the essays in *Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*.

Jens Lund, ed. (with Elizabeth Simpson). **Folk Arts of Washington State: A Survey of Contemporary Folk Arts and Artists in the State of Washington.** Tumwater, WA: Washington State Folklife Council, 1989. Pp. xx + 108, photographs, map, bibliography, appendix, ethnic resource guide, index. \$14.95 paper.

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Folk Arts of Washington State is a representative, although by no means exhaustive survey of the diverse folk arts and artists in Washington State. Research for a traveling exhibition of Washington State Folk Art (funded by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, Folk Arts Division) led to the publication of this book, and a second exhibition, the 1988 Governor's Invitational Art Exhibition: "For as Long as I Can Remember . . .": The Folk Art of Washington State." For the initial project, three folklorists, Phyllis A. Harrison, Janet C. Gilmore, and Harry Gammerdinger, were given the task of finding "a broad sample of contemporary Washington folk art." They visited, interviewed, and observed a number of folk artists in communities across the state. The articles that came out of their research, together with an extensive introductory survey by Jens Lund (the Washington State Folklorist) provide a sampling of regional folk arts as well as an introduction to the contemporary study of material folklore in general.

The examples and discussions in this book place individual artists and their communities in a role of central importance to the generation, meaning, and appreciation of folk art. One of the book's primary aims is to "define folk art as it exists in the context of the modern world." The various folkloric forms are therefore presented not simply as objects or artifacts, but as expressions of individual and community aesthetic values and interests. Folk arts play a significant role in the nurturing and identification of a sense of community. The