

in their essential contrasts (such as fantasy and reality in image, or line and pattern in organization). While he has not sacrificed complexity, Scheub has made some generalizations in laying the foundations of his argument. For example, mimesis as the representation of reality becomes something of a catch-all term. It is not substantial enough to support the weight of his words, and it is in such reliance that Scheub's thesis is weakest.

In general, however, the broad strokes of the book read strongly and well. He identifies the image as the fundamental unit of stories and the organization of images as providing the necessary rhythm. Image and organization in turn channel emotion, necessary if the teller is truly to reach the audience. In addition, individual experience assures that each story told and heard is something of a blank slate, a new—if related—experience of its own. Scheub employs the burdensome word “palimpsest” to describe this effect. He is not jargon-free in his own writing, but jargon-specific. On another note, he ignores intellectual connections to stories, such as those advocated by Bertolt Brecht. His stance is not incorrect, but incomplete.

Scheub employs both oral and written stories to make his case. As such, he creates an argument that is broader in scope than many made by folklorists. By explicitly using literary criticism and comparing oral stories with literary ones, he implicitly but directly aligns the oral and written works. Unfortunately, since the source data derives entirely from South Africa, this book will likely be used solely by Africanists. His results are too intriguing to let lie; the book and thesis would have been better served by a comparative study that reached across continents, and not simply across media. Aside from appealing to a broader audience, this would also have strengthened and illuminated his arguments further. Scheub's analysis is an insightful study and a straightforward read. Its surface clarity should not hide the depths of its meaning.

Kathleen Stokker. **Folklore Fights the Nazis: Humor in Occupied Norway, 1940–1945.** Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1995. Pp. 273, illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$17.95 paper.

Jeannie B. Thomas
Utah State University

Folklore often reflects the views of the groups from which it emerges, and folklorists are well aware of the Nazis' use of folklore to further their genocidal campaign. Kathleen Stokker's *Folklore Fights the Nazis* is an important reminder of how people in Norway used folklore to resist the Nazis, despite a 1942 law that meted out death for ridiculing Nazis. She argues that this wartime humor

gave freedom of speech to Norwegians deprived of it during the Nazi occupation of their country. According to Stokker, Norwegians were initially uncertain in the wake of the Nazi invasion, and jokes played an important role in crystallizing anti-Nazi sentiment through positive depictions of resistors and emphasis on Nazi stupidity and cruelty. She asserts that German politicians were concerned about the power of the jokes, quoting one German politician who said it was "suicidal" to allow people to tell anti-Nazi jokes (73). Drawing on diaries and "joke notebooks" kept by women during the war, she traces the themes and topics of the anti-Nazi joke cycles. These topics included put-down jokes directed at Hitler, Mussolini, Rommel, Norwegian political leaders who seemed sympathetic to the Nazis, women who befriended the Nazis, as well as Nazi brutality, Nazi propaganda, food shortages, and developments (especially German setbacks) in the war.

Stokker also discusses non-verbal aspects of the resistance. For example, the *Jossings*—a term referring to those opposed to the Nazis—would change seats on public transportation if a German soldier or a Norwegian Nazi sat next to them. The Germans put up placards forbidding this behavior; in response, the *Jossings* refused to sit inside the trams and instead stood on the back platform. Other non-verbal means to signify resistance included wearing a paper clip on the lapel, carrying a comb in the breast pocket, wearing the face of a wrist watch on the underside of the wrist, and placing matchsticks in hat bands. Stokker does not, however, romanticize the Norwegian resistance and notes that "the Norwegian Jewish community suffered the greatest loss of any Scandinavian country" (49) and that the *Jossing* resistance movement showed little sympathy to the plight of the Jews.

Stokker's material is fascinating and would translate well into a classroom setting. However, while this book has much to offer the field of folklore studies, one of the weakest parts of the text is its puzzling lack of significant attention to joke and humor research. The author does not delve into a *deep* analysis of the jokes that would employ the work of other humor and joke researchers. This type of analysis would have added to the book, but even without it, this book conveys a great deal of important and interesting information, and it gives readers insight into the use of humor as a form of resistance.