

grown up around the assassination of JFK, the events of 9/11, and the annual meetings of world leaders known as the Bilderberg Group, to mention only a few. But there is a continuum in this process, in the search for solutions to problems that are masked by conventional wisdom and custom: a quest that ranges from the uncanny on one end through the typical conspiracy theory to the other end of the continuum, where we find the valuable processes of connecting dots and thinking out of the box. Here, Lepselter moves her ethnographic lens to Rachel, Nevada, near Area 51, where she worked as a waitress in order to talk to believers who came to what she calls the “geographic focus of the uncanny American conspiracy theory” (p. 80).

She ends with a coda, titled “One More Thing.” Here, she tells her own story, which illustrates how immersion in such narratives, which are supported on all sides by earnest believers, can color one’s perception and emotion. She spent her last day of research talking to a UFO believer who she said “rattled” her. “I had started out with my sense of things intact,” she writes. “I was cheerful and curious.” He talked on for hours about the government and aliens “insinuating threats and sinister dangers until my eyes began to dim,” so that the trailer they were sitting in suddenly felt too small for the two of them. She left for home right after that. She tells us that she “drove through the desert numbly, his words stuck in my hair, his sinister predictions still thickening around me in the car” (p. 161).

Later at the airport while waiting to board the plane, a man came over and started a conversation. He had an accent and told her about his business and other things. When she said that she was tired and wanted to do some reading, he smiled and said, “Ah, Susan! . . . I see you have in you *the sociological imagination*. Very good, very good. You have a lot on your mind. I will not occupy you.” He then took her hand and squeezed it very hard, then walked away and evaporated. “It was then,” she writes, “I thought he was a Man in Black,” for he had said “sociological imagination! He was telling me he knew who I was. How often had I read of this, heard it and tape-recorded it as folklore?” (p. 162).

Not only does Lepselter argue her thesis in scholarly terms but, in the process, she also tells a good story in a literary vein, which makes the book not only worthwhile for understanding an interesting aspect of American culture, but also a pleasure to read.

The Legacy of Dell Hymes: Ethnopoetics, Narrative Inequality, and Voice. Ed. Paul V. Kroskrity and Anthony K. Webster. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015. Pp. 291, introduction, index.)

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What we have here is a smorgasbord of lively work that revisits and extends the legacy of Dell Hymes, that resolute Oregonian who consolidated ethnopoetics to recognize eloquent voices beyond the bounds of our literary canons. Those already practicing some form of ethnopoetic research will take delight in worthy applications and expansions of familiar analytical models. For those whose research focus lies elsewhere, this set of eight original articles, introduced by co-editors Paul V. Kroskrity and Anthony K. Webster and discussed in separate commentaries by Richard Bauman and Charles Briggs, will serve as an invitation to a significant field of interdisciplinary research focused on the social role of language, especially as harnessed to the task of telling stories in speech and song. Indeed, by articulating fresh perspectives on ethnopoetics, narrative inequality, and voice, this collection asserts a broader relevance for students of human societies.

Grounded in five decades’ worth of scholarly publications by Hymes, these contributions revive and sustain the Americanist tradition that was his milieu, with a clear lineage running through Edward Sapir and others of his ilk back to their intellectual progenitor, Franz Boas. The geographical focus is on Native North America, with concentrations in the Southwest and Northwest of the United States, in the West of Canada, and in the Arctic region that brought Boas into ethnology. These articles delve into verbal art traditions in indigenous communities

of this New World sector, but they acquire a new allure by coming to grips with contemporary issues and essaying current modes of analysis that were unknown to Boas and only adumbrated in the work of Sapir, Melville Jacobs, and Boas' other illustrious students. If these worthies were primarily motivated to document verbal repertoires of western North America as a manifestation of indigenous cultures, the authors in this volume bring other concerns to their labor, including these: to appreciate the rhetorical moves of oral performances situated in relationships marked by a power differential; to assess strategies for representing the complexity of these performances through considered techniques of transcription, translation, and formatting; to argue for verbal artistry as a valuable component in language revitalization projects; to exalt Native languages as vehicles for contemporary poetic invention; and to critique the ethnographic practices of foundational figures in this arena, who inevitably brought cultural prejudices and stereotypes into their work.

Indeed, the man whose work is celebrated in this book, Dell Hymes, is not immune from critical evaluation; the contributors to this volume are inspired by Hymes' research but not slavishly guided by it. In particular, the penchant of the later Hymes to encounter in (or impose upon) the narrative texts he inspected a strict patterning of phrases or clauses into units of standard dimensions comes in for pretty rough treatment. Ironically, this practice is compared at a few points in the book under review to the prescriptive formulas of Noam Chomsky's generative grammar, which served as the impetus for Hymes and others to venture out into the world of spoken words for a better sense for how language actually works. The Hymes who is welcomed into the tent constructed here is the scholar-activist who fought for the recognition of marginalized discourses and the artists who produce them.

This edited volume has its origins in a conversation between the co-editors at the annual meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) in New Orleans in 2010. This chat caused them to organize two panels at the AAA meeting the next year in Montreal, where

Moira Marsh, editor of the *Journal of Folklore Research* (JFR), swooped in to propose a special issue of that journal. Her successor at JFR, Jason Jackson, saw this process to its conclusion; in turn, his successor as JFR editor, Michael Foster, arranged with Indiana University Press to convert this triple issue of JFR into the first book in a new series with the press, "Encounters: Explorations in Folklore and Ethnomusicology." This folklore connection permeates the contents of this volume, a welcome recognition of the signal contributions of folkloristics to the field of ethnopoetics.

The Legacy of Dell Hymes opens with a brief introduction by the co-editors, followed by essays grouped into two sections, "Listening for Voices" and "Ethnopoetic Pathways." The first section ends with commentary by Bauman, the second with commentary by Briggs. In their introduction, the co-editors sound a theme that will resonate across the pages of the book, Hymes' argument (articulated in his *Ethnography, Linguistics, Narrative Inequality: Toward an Understanding of Voice*, Taylor & Francis, 1996, p. 64) for two kinds of freedom with regard to voice: "a freedom to have one's voice heard" and "a freedom to develop a voice worth hearing." Hymes' vision of these interconnected freedoms serves as a kind of charter for the essays collected in this book. The co-editors trace the origins of this interest in poetic forms in Native North America to Boas, but they note that, unlike Boas, who found these texts to be "untranslatable," Hymes made it his project to devise ways to accomplish such translation. Translation—whether linguistic, cultural, or situational—remains at the heart of the contributions to this volume.

There is not sufficient space in this review to do justice to the many substantial contributions of the essays gathered in *The Legacy of Dell Hymes*. What I will do instead is bring out points of saliency in my reading of the assembled essays, making mention along the way of each chapter. Robert Moore's "Reinventing Ethnopoetics" opens the first section of the book and offers a useful parsing of ethnopoetics into two streams, one that looks at the poetics of performance, the other at the textual organization of oral literature. Moore identifies in the

coyote stories of Lucinda Smith (told in the Kiksht language, a Wasco variety spoken in Central Oregon) a contrapuntal style of code-switching that allows her to do justice to the exigencies of both story-plot and conversational setting. Moore argues for an ethnopoetics oriented to the ethnographic encounter as “a cultural episode in its own right” (p. 32); in the process, he seeks to redeem the “ethno-” prefix as a gathering point for an intellectual, political, and poetic project.

Next up is “The Patterning of Style: Indices of Performance through Ethnopoetic Analysis of Century-Old Wax Cylinders” by Alexander King, who analyzes two Koryak narratives recorded in the winter of 1900–1901 on wax cylinders by members of the Jesup expedition to the circumpolar Arctic. Remarkably, King is able to use Hymes’ methods of text-parsing to detect the likely presence of bodily gestures in the original performance, and he proposes that we attend to “a somatic index” operative in all narrative performance. King’s piece is followed by M. Eleanor Nevins’ “‘Grow with That, Walk with That’: Hymes, Dialogicality, and Text Collections,” in which the author identifies an Apache speech genre, *bá’hadziih*, that purports to describe Apache lives but that, on close inspection, seeks to introduce an ethical dimension to the ethnographic encounter, awakening us to “the strategies employed by anthropological consultants” (p. 102). If I may be permitted a personal reference, I was reminded, in reading Nevins’ chapter, of my conversation with Mariano Chicunque, a Kamsá storyteller, who re-centered our discussion of his Andean people by stating: “So wise were our elders . . . they understood even though they weren’t baptized.”

Following the contribution by Nevins is Anthony Webster’s “The Validity of Navajo Is in Its Sounds’: On Hymes, Navajo Poetry, Punning, and the Recognition of Voice.” Webster draws on Hymes’ discussion (in the 1979 issue of the *International Journal of Linguistics*) of talking like a bear in Takelma to isolate an expressive phoneme, the velar fricative /x/, which, in a Navajo poem by Rex Lee Jim, signifies a story protagonist, badger, being out of control. This feature, vital to the force of the poem, would be edited out in a transcription shaped

by a commitment to standard Navajo, leading Webster to argue for “intimate grammars” that capture “poetic and aesthetic practices” (p. 125). Webster’s co-editor, Paul Kroskrity, next offers his “Discursive Discriminations in the Representation of Western Mono and Yokuts Stories: Confronting Narrative Inequality and Listening to Indigenous Voices in Central California,” with its stiff challenge to ethnographic and interpretive methods that inadvertently preserve colonialist and ethnocentric biases. Kroskrity argues that the work of earlier scholars in these California communities is readily seen as contributing to “a racializing project,” and that our contemporary ethnopoetics, with its fixation on linguistic purity and tidy texts, might be playing to “a multiculturalism that merely reproduces many of the problems for indigenous languages that can be found in assimilationist practices of the past” (p. 157). For Kroskrity, the way out of this dilemma is to follow Hymes in embracing the “mediative” rather than the “extractive” approach to ethnopoetic resources. This first section concludes with Bauman’s “Discovery and Dialogue in Ethnopoetics,” in which he notes the multiple semantic layering in the term “voice” and advises that we keep in mind what he calls “the radical insight of the ethnography of speaking—that speakers use their voices to accomplish things in the world” (p. 177).

The second section, “Ethnopoetic Pathways,” is the shorter of the book’s two sections, containing only three essays and the Briggs commentary. In “The Poetics of Language Revitalization: Text, Performance, and Change,” Gerald Carr and Barbra Meek examine language revitalization projects in the Yukon Territory of Canada. They argue that the freedom and joy found in vernacular genres of verbal artistry need to be brought into these projects so that they can “inspire budding performers rather than leave their aspirations languishing in the margins of Western inscription” (p. 198). Interestingly, in reference to Yukon storytelling, Carr and Meek found that theatrical performances of traditional tales were most effective in communicating excitement about learning the language.

Sean Patrick O’Neill’s “Translating Oral Literature in Indigenous Societies: Ethnic Aes-

thetic Performances in Multicultural and Multilingual Settings” revisits a zone in northwestern California to reassess the received notion, certified by previous scholars, that the tribes there share a common culture in spite of the fact that three different native languages prevail in the region. In working with native speakers of Hupa on their traditional tales, he finds that they give great importance to apparently minor differences between Hupa versions and those of their Yurok and Karuk neighbors, so much so that they resist translating these tales into Hupa without making the needed corrections. O’Neill comes to see the idea of cultural convergence in the region as an illusion and he sees storytelling as “a performance of identity” wherein “a major shift in meaning” can occur with “only a minor change in the value or status of the characters” (p. 218). O’Neill argues that since storytelling is sensitive to these situational factors, our translations need to move beyond what he calls the “fidelity ideology” to encompass the artistic vision of narrative performers.

David Samuels’ “Ethnopoetics and Ideologies of Poetic Truth” is the final essay in this second set. Samuels juxtaposes a sermon delivered in English by a Lutheran pastor to the San Carlos Apache congregation with a subsequent translation of this sermon into Apache by one of the Apache congregants. He finds a differential poetics operating in the two texts, though each strives to be an ethical discourse. The book closes with Briggs’ commentary, titled “Contested Mobilities: On the Politics and Ethnopo-

etics of Circulation.” Briggs interrogates theories on the movement of culture, and impediments to such mobility, in the light of persisting colonialist habits of thought. He draws attention to the contrast between “object-centered and process-centered models of circulation” (p. 278) and warns against “shallow, monologic models” that have caused scholars “to miss—or even sometimes to suppress—the diversity of practices” that people bring to the task of expressing themselves.

As this somewhat rushed survey of the contents of *The Legacy of Dell Hymes* will hopefully convey, this book contains riches for students of expressive culture. Folklorists in particular will find these essays intriguing for several reasons. They establish the materials we study as central to doing ethnopoetics, and they highlight the key contributions of folkloristics to ethnopoetic research. It is especially interesting to see how these scholars—who are, for the most part, not folklorists—interact with the kind of vernacular discourse that attracts our own attention. And, by digging into the salvage ethnology of our Americanist forebears, these essays creatively revisit one of our field’s most influential sources. The contributors to this volume have not only revived ethnopoetics as a research project in the contemporary moment; they have also pointed the way to fruitful lines of folkloristic research and collaboration in the future, lines founded on the importance of measured and allusive speech and that build on Dell Hymes’ commitment to the voices of marginalized peoples.