

wealth of information on the searches and the searchers for gold, silver and material links to the past in every part of Oklahoma, while never neglecting those who told the stories.

Although this book is not at the center of our discipline, it is an indication of the influence folklore has on local history and demonstrates rigorous and interesting scholarship. This is the kind of popular history that should be included in everyone's library.

Loyal Jones and Billy Edd Wheeler. **Hometown Humor, U.S.A.** Little Rock: August House, 1991. Pp. 220. \$9.95 paperback.

James P. Leary. **Midwestern Folk Humor: Jokes on Farming, Logging, Religion, and Traditional Ways.** Little Rock: August House, 1991. Pp. 269, introduction, photos, collection notes, bibliography, index of tellers, index of locations. \$24.95 cloth.

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Both of these books, published by August House, are intended for the non-scholar, but there is a distinct difference in approach between the two, stemming from the differing backgrounds of the authors.

Hometown Humor, U.S.A. is a collection of approximately 300 jokes taken mainly from the southeast United States. The two editors do not seem to have an extensive background in the formal study of folklore, but are rather indigenous experts on southern culture. Loyal Jones, from North Carolina, directs the Appalachian Center of Berea College. Billy Edd Wheeler is an accomplished songwriter and storyteller, as well as a playwright and poet.

The editors main point seems to be that, while the "oral tradition" has come upon hard times, jokes are still around and thriving. In addition, they point out the virtues of humor as a healing medium, and as a unique way to capture the everyday life and concerns of "small town America"—no great theoretical breakthroughs here. *Hometown Humor, U.S.A.* is simply a collection of jokes arranged into broad categories such as "Health," "Farms and Farmers," and so forth.

The second book, *Midwestern Folk Humor*, while also written for the non-scholar, holds much more interest for the professional folklorist, or those looking for more than just a collection of jokes. James P. Leary holds a Ph.D. in folklore from Indiana University and is currently staff folklorist

at the Wisconsin Folk Museum at Mt. Horeb. His book effectively combines public sector work and basic folklore scholarship.

The book includes an informative introduction by W.K. McNeil which outlines a brief but concise history of American folkloristics, and introduces some of the major concepts of folklore collection and study with an emphasis on "jokelore."

The main body of the work contains jokes collected about various ethnic groups and occupations common to the upper Midwest region. Each section is supplemented with brief historical notes on the group in question, and the jokes are presented as they were recorded. There are also numerous footnotes on potentially obscure vocabulary and references within the jokes themselves. Leary provides us with information, photos, and locations of each of his informants, and each of the jokes is well documented in the collection notes.

Of the two, *Hometown Humor, U.S.A.* is much less satisfying for the folklorist. The book is written as light reading for the non-scholar, and the only attempt to document each joke is that of including the name and residence of each teller. The jokes are also heavily edited. It is moderately successful as a book for light reading only, but holds little promise for the folklorist.

Midwestern Folk Humor succeeds very well as a non-theoretical collection of folk humor. Leary states this as his intention, and he achieves this goal admirably. The book is enjoyable to the professional folklorist and a potentially useful resource. I have used it successfully to illustrate discussions on folk humor in an introductory course on American folklore.

Laurel Horton, ed. **Uncoverings 1989**. Volume 10 of the Research Papers of the American Quilt Study Group. San Francisco: American Quilt Study Group, 1990. Pp. 167, preface, index.

Laurel Horton, ed. **Uncoverings 1990**. Volume 11 of the Research Papers of the American Quilt Study Group. San Francisco: American Quilt Study Group, 1991. Pp. 219, preface, index.

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More folklorists should know about the American Quilt Study Group and their annual publication, *Uncoverings*, which inspired me to become involved with the organization. AQSG's annual seminar brings folk artists together with scholars from an impressive array of disciplines and concerns,