

American Folklore Society Monthly News Bulletin

November 2009

[A monthly e-mail update from AFS to fill the gap between the *AFS News* and the new AFS web site.]

Report from the 2009 AFS Annual Meeting, Boise

More than 600 folklorists participated in the Society's 121st annual meeting, held at the Boise Centre in downtown Boise, Idaho, on October 21-24.

Our plenary speakers were Carlos Vélez-Ibáñez of Arizona State University ("The Ethics of Institutions: Pitfalls of an Engaged Folklore and Tales from the Federal Courts"); Roger Welsch of Dannebrog, Nebraska ("Confessions of a Wannabe: When The Prime Directive Backfires"); Wolfgang Mieder of the University of Vermont ("It Takes a Village to Change the World': Proverbial Politics and the Ethics of Place"); and AFS President Elaine Lawless of the University of Missouri ("Folklore as a Map of the World: Rejecting 'Home' as a Failure of the Imagination").

The theme for the meeting (Examining the Ethics of Place) created by the annual meeting committee seemed to resonate with the membership: quite a number of presentations and sessions focused on some aspect of the theme or on Place in more general terms.

In addition, the meeting had a number of special "tracks" running through it, including:

- A two-day "conference within a conference" on folk arts in education sponsored by Local Learning: The National Network for Folk Arts in Education and the AFS Folklore and Education Section (and funded by NEA), plus their customary Saturday morning hands-on workshop for local K-12 teachers
- An AFS-sponsored three-part series of forums, led by Jason Baird Jackson of Indiana University, on the futures of communications in folklore, focusing in turn on journals, books, and new media
- A three-part series of forums, sponsored by the AFS and PACT (Preserving America's Cultural Traditions, the national alliance of public folklore government agencies and non-profits), on the future of cultural policy in the US

- Several sessions devoted to important tradition-bearers from the Intermountain West, including Nez Perce elder and healer Horace Axtell, healer and folk artist Eva Castellanoz, and musician Rosalie Sorrels
- Three forums on the legacies of Archie Green for folklore scholarship and practice
- A series of sessions and two half-day professional development workshops on archiving theory, methods, and practice

At the conclusion of the annual business meeting in Boise, it was announced that **"Lay and Expert Knowledge"** will be the theme (on which presentations and sessions will be encouraged but not required) for the 122nd annual meeting, set for October 13-16, 2010, in Nashville, Tennessee. The Invitation for Participation will be posted on the AFS web site on February 1, 2010 (www.afsnet.org/annualmeet/index.cfm), and all meeting proposals will be due by March 31.

Society Prizes and Honors Announced at AFS

A number of Society prizes and honors were announced at the 2009 annual meeting's opening ceremonies on October 21.

Jim Leary of the University of Wisconsin and **Tim Lloyd** of the AFS were named as new members of the AFS Fellows.

The Benjamin A. Botkin Prize was awarded to **Elaine Eff** of Baltimore, Maryland.

The Zora Neale Hurston Prize was awarded to **Jelani Mahiri** of the University of California, Berkeley.

The Américo Paredes Prize recipient was **Debora Kodish** of the Philadelphia Folklore Project.

Daniel W. Patterson, *emeritus* of the University of North Carolina, received the AFS Kenneth Goldstein Award for Lifetime Academic Leadership.

The 2009 Chicago Folklore Prize was awarded to **Ray Cashman** of The Ohio State University for his *Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border* (Indiana University Press, 2008), and to **Michael Dylan Foster** of Indiana University for his *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (University of California Press, 2009).

The Chicago Folklore Prize review committee had this to say about these two titles:

“The Chicago Folklore Prize Committee for 2009 had to contend with an embarrassment of riches. So extraordinary was the abundance and range and depth of high-quality scholarship in the cohort that the Committee was relieved upon realizing that we could give homage to the best of *two* quite different approaches to our discipline. The first is the ethnographic. Here the recipient is Ray Cashman’s *Storytelling on the Northern Irish Border* (Indiana University Press, 2008), the fruit of a decade’s visits to a locale on the western border of Northern Ireland that is surrounded geographically by the Republic of Ireland. The study is an exposition of and meditation upon ‘commemorative narrative’ in a time of ongoing socioeconomic change and political contestation. Through presentation of place, historical-cultural context, and field text, the author explores ways in which a single genre, the local-character anecdote (principally as performed at wakes and at ceilis) can be used toward ‘construction of community and local identity.’ He also shows ways in which this humble genre mediates the cultural and political and religious divides that have riven the border country for so many decades. And he shows how other commemorative social events--parades, fairs, local historical society projects, horse-pulling contests—are put to the same uses. Thickly described, with notes that provide full and satisfying accounts of scholarly background, this work is a model of conscientious folklore fieldwork and folklore scholarship, meticulous and encompassing.

“Though contemporary folklore study in the United States is weighted towards the ethnographic, that other large domain of folklore research, the ‘literary-historical,’ is hardly gone from our scholarly landscape. Superior work that looks mainly to the written record and to the past earns our praise as well. This year’s other recipient, Michael Dylan Foster’s *Pandemonium and Parade: Japanese Monsters and the Culture of Yōkai* (University of California Press, 2009), exemplifies the potential of the literary side of folklore studies. With erudition and analytical depth, this study explores a category of Japanese folk demon, *yōkai*, over more than three centuries. With a theoretical sophistication that avoids appeals to simplistic models of cultural continuity, Foster reveals how these multifarious “strange beings” have circulated through the Japanese cultural imaginary, coming into prominence at certain historical junctures and reflecting the varied social forces of those moments. In its thorough examination of one class of supernatural being, the work sheds light on key concerns of contemporary folklore studies: the interplay of local and national cultures, the force of rural nostalgia in industrial and post-industrial societies, the porous and shifting boundaries between folk culture and popular or mass culture, and the economics and politics of the vernacular imagination. At its core a study of one

embodiment of the force of weirdness in culture, *Pandemonium and Parade* resonates with many of the phenomena that folklorists are drawn to.”

Section Prizes and Awards Announced at AFS

The prizes and awards of a number of AFS sections were announced at the 2009 annual business meeting on October 24.

The **Archives and Libraries Section** awarded its 2009 Polly Grimshaw Prize, which supports folklore or ethnomusicology projects with a significant connection to libraries and archives, to **Suzanne Godby Ingalsbe** of Indiana University for her work to re-establish the link between Iranian prayer rugs at the Smithsonian and their makers.

The **Children’s Folklore Section** 2009 Aesop Awards, which recognize excellence in English-language books for children and young adults that present or incorporate folklore, went to:

1. *Naupaka*, by Nona Beamer, illustrations by Caren Ke'ala Loebel-Fried, Bishop Museum Press.
2. *Kalevala, Tales of Magic and Adventure*, retold by Kirsti Makenin, illustrated by Pirkko-Liisa Surojegin, translated by Kaarina Brooks; Simply Read Books.
3. *Dance, Nana, Dance*, retold by Joe Hayes, illustrated by Mauricio Trenard Sayago; Cinco Puntos Press.

Aesop Accolade honorable mentions were awarded to:

1. *The Barefoot Book of Earth Tales*, retold by Dawn Casey, illustrated by Anne Wilson; Barefoot Books.
2. *Jack Tales and Mountain Yarns As Told By Orville Hicks*, transcription and text by Julia Taylor Ebel, illustrations by Sherry Jenkins Jensen; Parkway Publishers, Inc.
3. *Polish Folktales and Folklore*, retold by Michal Malinowski and Anne Pellowski; World Folklore Series, Libraries Unlimited.
4. *Princess Peacock, Tales From the Other Peoples Of China*, retold by Haiwang Yuan; World Folklore Series, Libraries Unlimited.
5. *Tsunami!* by Kimiko Kajikawa, illustrated by Ed Young; Philomel Books.

The **Folklore and Education Section** awarded the 2009 Dorothy Howard Award prize to the **Michigan Traditional Arts Program** of the Michigan State University Museum for its 2008 publication *Folk Arts in Education: A Resource Handbook II*, edited by Marsha McDowell and LuAnne Kozma, which identifies best practices and uses of new technology by folklorists and educators around the country. The section also presented its 2009 Roeder Robinson Ward prize to elementary educator **Kathy Weeks** of Portland, Oregon.

The 2009 recipient of the Richard Reuss Prize, given by the **Folklore and History Section** for the best paper produced by a student on the history of folklore studies, is **Trevor Blank**, a doctoral student at the Pennsylvania State University, Harrisburg, in American Studies. The title of his essay, published in *The Folklore Historian*, vol. 25, 2008, pp. 23-44, is "The History of the Hoosier Folklore Society, 1937-2007."

The **Jewish Folklore and Ethnology Section** awarded its Raphael Patai Prize for 2009 to **Jillian Gould** of the Department of Folklore of the Memorial University of Newfoundland for her paper "Shiva as a Creative Ritual in an Institutional Home."

The **Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer, and Allies Section** announced that the 2009 recipients of the Section's annual Student Essay Award were **Joy Brooke Fairfield** of New York University, for the essay "Becoming-Mouse, Becoming-Man: The Sideways Growth of Princess Mouseskin," and **Kerry Whigham**, also of New York University, for the essay "Her Majesty the King: Trans Bodies and Gender Fluidity in *The Fisherman and His Wife*."

The **Storytelling Section** presented its 2009 Daniel Crowley Award for a student essay dealing with storytelling performance to **Benjamin Gatling**, doctoral student in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Cultures at Ohio State University, for his essay "Negotiations in Performance: A Study of the Storytelling Performance of Two Adolescent Afghan Storytellers."

The 2010 American Folklore Society Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award

This award is bestowed every two years on a living senior scholar in recognition of outstanding scholarly achievement over the course of a career. The awardee is honored at the American Folklore Society annual meeting, and is given a \$500 prize, a plaque, and lifetime membership in the Society.

The next review of nominations will take place in 2010. To nominate a candidate for the award, submit four copies of a cover letter and supporting materials detailing the rationale for the candidate's nomination, with an electronic copy of the cover letter sent by e-mail, by **February 15, 2010**, to Timothy Lloyd, Executive Director, American Folklore Society, Mershon Center, Ohio State University, 1501 Neil Avenue, Columbus, OH 43201 USA; lloyd.100@osu.edu. Nominees not selected in the year of their original nomination are kept in consideration for two more reviews.

Supporting materials should include a CV or list of scholarly positions; publications and other scholarly productions; professional and university service; degrees; awards, grants, and honors. Other materials in the nominating package, numbering less than 25 pages, may also include reviews of prominent works, letters and articles by major scholars attesting to the candidate's contributions and achievements, and texts of awards and honors.

The past recipients of the AFS Lifetime Scholarly Achievement Award are:

W.F.H. Nicolaisen, University of Aberdeen, *emeritus* of the State University of New York at Binghamton (2002)

Linda Dégh, Indiana University, *emerita* (2004)

Don Yoder, University of Pennsylvania, *emeritus* (2006)

Richard Bauman, Indiana University, *emeritus* (2008)

Ohio State University Program Featured in *Inside Higher Ed*

The October 22, 2009, edition of Inside Higher Ed featured a story about the **Veterans Learning Community** project, a collaboration between The Ohio State University's Center for Folklore Studies and Department of Comparative Studies. The article is available at <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/10/22/veterans#>

Shukla Receives Publication Award

Pravina Shukla, an associate professor of folklore and ethnomusicology at Indiana University, has been awarded the 2009 Millia Davenport Publication Award given by the Costume Society of America for her book *The Grace of Four Moons: Dress, Adornment, and the Art of the Body in Modern India* (2008, Indiana University Press).

The award, named to honor the memory of Millia Davenport (1896-1992), noted costume scholar and theater designer, recognizes excellence in scholarship in the study of costume. The award seeks to promote research and publication on dress, recognizing a published book or exhibition catalog that makes a significant contribution to the study of costume, reflecting original thought and exceptional creativity, and drawing on appropriate research methods and techniques.

The 498-page book documents the clothing decisions made by ordinary people in their everyday lives. Based on close ethnographic fieldwork, primarily in the city of Banaras in northeastern India, Shukla conceptualizes and realizes a model for the study of body art in a modern, urban setting. By attending to the production of items of bodily adornment, and to the key contexts of creation and commerce, the book portrays men and women as creative individuals who make deliberate choices on a social field of force and counterforce.

"The premise of the book is visual communication, that through what you do with your clothing you are saying so much about your culture, gender, social-economic class, caste, religion and family," said Shukla, also an adjunct faculty member in anthropology, India studies and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies and an associate curator at IU's Mathers Museum of World Cultures.

Through long interviews, and through the voices of Indian people, *The Grace of Four Moons* describes the fullness of creative action, tracing, for example, the journey of a gold ingot from the atelier of a goldsmith who fashioned it into a bracelet, through the shop where it was sold, to its final place in the assembled bodily display of a shy bride.

This year's Davenport Award jury had a strong field of short-listed books representing many aspects of dress scholarship. The jurors called *The Grace of Four Moons* "well researched and written," praising Shukla's efforts "to raise the profile of costume scholarship."

One juror commented, "Her evocation of the sight, sound, smell, and feel of dress and her emphasis on understanding the performative act of dressing is brilliant." Kristina Haugland, chair of the Davenport Publication Award Committee, said the book has been judged to be "an outstanding example of dress scholarship."

News from the University of Pennsylvania

Dan Ben-Amos and **Mary Hufford** have provided the following update regarding the future of the holdings of the Folklore Archive of the Center for Folklore and Ethnography at the University of Pennsylvania and have announced the availability of books from the Center Library for a minimal donation.

"Hufford has worked within the University to identify a new home on campus for the Folklore Archive. We are pleased to inform you that the physical manuscripts, images, and recorded sound will be permanently housed in the Archive at the Penn Museum (formerly the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Anthropology and Archeology). A list of the holdings is posted at http://www.sas.upenn.edu/folklore/grad_program/handbook/archive.html.

"In addition, Penn's Schoenberg Center for Electronic Text and Image (SCETI) has expressed an interest in hosting the Penn Folklore Archive Online. Toward that end, over the past three years, with support from the Roger D. Abrahams fund for Folklore and Ethnography and the School of Arts and Sciences, we have migrated most of the manuscripts, along with the Ray L. Birdwhistell moving image collection and the MacEdward Leach Jamaica recorded sound collection to digital format. We plan, with the help of your donations, to migrate additional endangered sound recordings for online accessibility. Major collections include the Caribbean recorded sound collections of Jacob Elder and Roger D. Abrahams, the Appalachian and Pennsylvania recorded sound collections of MacEdward Leach and Samuel Bayard, and original sound recordings made in Newfoundland by Kenneth S. Goldstein and Wilf Wareham, as well as smaller recorded sound collections not duplicated in other repositories.

"The Archive's reference collection contains approximately 1500 books and journals that duplicate holdings in the University library system. Therefore we have decided to make them available to the national and international community of folklorists as incentives for donating to the Roger D. Abrahams Fund. You will find a list of the books and soon-to-be-listed journals at <http://www.sas.upenn.edu/folklore/center/donations.html> along with instructions for making your donation and for selecting the books and journals that will speedily be migrating your way once the checks have cleared."

The Archival Platform

The **Archival Platform** is a networking, advocacy, and research initiative in the archive and heritage sector in South Africa. Its October newsletter is now available at http://www.archivalplatform.org/news/entry/archival_platform_october_newsletter/, and you can subscribe online. Submissions of relevant comments, blogs, news and resources are all very welcome.

Delta Symposium Call for Papers

The Department of English and Philosophy at Arkansas State University opens a call for papers and presentations for the sixteenth annual **Delta Symposium** on April 7-10, 2010. Proposals that support this year's theme of "Region and the Politics of Culture" are especially encouraged. Symposium participants will offer presentations that explore ways in which the representation of culture within the region is implicated in wider social and political movements, but other proposals relevant to the history, culture, arts, music, or politics of the region are also welcome. The symposium hosts scholars and students of the humanities and social sciences, and features multidisciplinary presentations on topics ranging from blues and other forms of music associated with the Delta to historical and contemporary issues relevant to the region. The event offers a variety of presentations, including panels, musical and theatrical performances, key-note speakers, and readings/signings by prominent authors and poets. Further information can be had by contacting the Delta Symposium Committee or by checking the Symposium Web site: www.clt.astate.edu/blues. Deadline for entries is January 1, 2010. (Delta Symposium Committee, c/o Dr. Carol O'Connor and Dr. Gregory Hansen, Co-Chairs, Arkansas State University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, PO Box 1150, State University AR 72467 USA; coconnor@astate.edu; Phone: 870/972-3973; Fax: 870/972-3976.

Winterthur Research Fellowship Announcement

The **Winterthur Museum & Country Estate**, a public museum, library, and garden that supports the advanced study of American art, culture, and history, is pleased to announce its Research Fellowship Program for 2010–11. Winterthur offers an extensive program of short- and long-term fellowships open to academic, independent, and museum scholars—including advanced graduate students—to support research in material culture, architecture, decorative arts, design, consumer culture, garden and landscape studies, Shaker studies, travel and tourism, the Atlantic World, childhood, literary culture, and many other areas of social and cultural history. Fellowships include 4–9 month NEH fellowships, 1–2 semester dissertation fellowships, and 1–2 month short-term fellowships. Fellows have full access to the library collections, including more than 87,000 volumes and one-half million manuscripts and images, searchable online at www.winterthur.org/research/library_resources.asp. Resources for the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries include period trade catalogues, auction and exhibition catalogues, and an extensive reference photograph collection of decorative arts, printed books, and ephemera. Fellows may conduct object-based research in the museum collection, which includes 85,000 artifacts

and works of art made or used in America to 1860, with a strong emphasis on domestic life. Winterthur also supports a program of scholarly publications, including Winterthur Portfolio: A Journal of American Material Culture. Fellows reside in a furnished stone farmhouse on the Winterthur grounds and participate in the lively scholarly community at Winterthur, the nearby Hagley Museum and Library, the University of Delaware, and other area museums. Fellowship applications are due January 15, 2010. For more details and to apply visit www.winterthur.org/research/fellowship.asp or e-mail Rosemary T. Krill at rkrill@winterthur.org.

D.K. Wilgus Collection Available Online

Part of the **D. K. Wilgus** collection of ballads and folksongs is now available for online listening. Wilgus and Wayland D. Hand established folklore studies at UCLA, and together founded the Folklore and Mythology Program in 1965. Wilgus was a folksong and ballad scholar, indefatigable fieldworker, and renowned authority on Anglo-American folksong, "race" records, and "hillbilly" music. He directed five folk music festivals at UCLA. He was Chair of the Folklore Program for 17 years. Many of the field recordings of American and Irish folk music in this collection are his or those of David Evans, one of his students (a noted authority on blues). This collection was originally part of the Folklore and Mythology Department, but in Fall 2002 was acquired by the Ethnomusicology Archive.

Digitization of the field recordings was made possible by a generous grant from the Grammy Foundation. And UCLA is currently working on a new two-year Grammy grant to finish digitizing the entire collection. To listen to recordings from the collection, go to <http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/viewItem.do?ark=21198/zz00089bvf>.