

NOTES for QUERIES

The FOLKLORE FORUM would like to take this opportunity to apprise our readers of some of the articles that will appear in our forthcoming issues. They are: "Frontier Humor in the Novels of Henry James," "Stith Thompson and the Scatological Imagination," "Solar Mythology in the Poems of Joyce Kilmer," "Deathbed Confessions: Problems in Folklore Collecting," "Preliminary Steps toward a Note on a Rhetorical Inquiry."

Query: In Churubusco, Indiana an annual festival, Turtle Days, commemorates the town's futile attempts to capture its lake-dwelling mammoth turtle, dubbed Oscar or "The Beast of 'Busco'". The first sighting of Oscar in 1949 precipitated a massive monster hunt, an invasion of the area by thousands of curiosity seekers and a local craze for turtle soup, turtle burgers, turtle-neck sweaters, turtle tales, turtle songs, and turtle objets d'art. It is my suspicion that this complex of belief, narrative and celebration is both typical and widespread throughout America. The quest for the mythical animal has long flourished as a narrative motif in American folklore; however, evidence of correlative expeditions, festivals or panics is extremely difficult to locate, especially when we are dealing with recent developments. At present I am compiling a list of monster-inspired community behavior and related memorats, legends, tall-tales and hoaxes. With hopes of representing the nation-wide distribution of these phenomena, I would greatly appreciate any information, leads or hearsay. -- John Gutowski, Folklore Institute, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

Jan Brunvand, our correspondent in Zion informs us: The right version of the children's rhyme quoted in your latest "little" communication (FOLKLORE FORUM III (2):71) is as follows, sung to the tune of Frere Jacques:

Marijuana, marijuana
LSD, LSD,
Scientists make it, teachers take it,
Why can't we, why can't we?

I heard it first quoted about a year ago from the pulpit (Unitarian) by a speaker on drugs who heard it from his ten-year old son. My own son, when he overheard me singing it at home, said he also knew it. I passed it to a folklore class at the College of Idaho (Caldwell) about last August, but they already knew it with "principals/teachers" in line three. You will also find it quoted correctly in my forthcoming little guidebook to collecting Utah folklore. I'll put the FORUM on the list for a review copy since by then I'll be in Bucharest.

Query: Would any moderately wealthy individual be interested in buying a bi-monthly scholarly folklore journal with a semi-annual bibliographic and special series? Why not?
