

study, but to many. Indeed, she makes a lofty attempt to tackle several key issues surrounding this topic, and the reader may find her/himself wishing the chapters were longer and referenced more texts. However, even if the argument is restricted by page numbers, the book should incite discussion across academic disciplines, bringing together folklorists and child-rights activists, cultural studies and children's literature scholars. For this reason, the book is invaluable to anyone interested in childhood studies, no matter what their academic or professional angle.

Overall, the book serves as an extensive study of childhood agency through food lore. While folklorists and cultural studies scholars may recognize references to Jay Mechling and Clifford Geertz, and to Roland Barthes and Antonio Gramsci, respectively, the book is also pertinent to child-rights activists. Honeyman, an Associate Professor of English and a cultural studies scholar, does not claim to be a strict folklorist, but she does argue for the importance of folklore to a variety of disciplines, including popular culture and cultural studies more generally. Folklorists hoping for an ethnographic approach to childhood studies should consult another resource; those more inclined toward textual analysis will enjoy Honeyman's decadent assortment of fairy tales, lore, and literature references. Because of its interdisciplinary nature, academics and professionals in the fields of folklore, childhood studies, children's literature, fairy tale studies, and cultural studies should find significant the arguments made in this book, relevant to their specific discipline. *Consuming Agency* is particularly useful to the student seeking to make connections across these fields.

**Children's Folklore: A Handbook.** By Elizabeth Tucker. (Westport, CT: 2008. Pp. 1-164, preface, introduction, glossary, bibliography, web resources, index.)

MICHELE D. CASTLEMAN

Elizabeth Tucker's *Children's Folklore: A Handbook* (2009) is an introductory guide to the "traditional knowledge shared by a group of two or more children, usually without the involvement of adults" (p. 1). The Handbook is a comprehensive survey that considers both historical approaches and recent developments in the study of children's folklore. According to Tucker, its purpose is to "provide an overview of children's folklore since the late 1800s" within the major genres (p.vii). She defines and provides examples of riddles, jokes, rhymes, taunts, songs, cheers, games, pranks, narratives, rituals and material culture. The vast majority of the folktales incorporated in the survey are from English-speaking countries, although occasional Indo-European lore and personal narratives are included as well. Tucker generally provides the context for each sample — the time and place it was recorded, the age of the children involved, and the source where it appears — and a few brief analytical statements. Tucker notes that her Handbook emphasizes "nature lore and imaginative, dangerous, and sexually oriented games" more than previous surveys have (p. 2). She regularly interprets the case studies for their sexual content or for their implications about gender, race and power relations, as well as for other matters of cultural significance.

Tucker's discussions of dirty jokes, boy/girl games, and her attention to routines of victimization and to online forums for the transmission of children's folklore make this a noteworthy handbook. She also includes helpful references that could initiate more extensive research on the part of the reader. Some of the most common citations are to the works of Brian Sutton-Smith, Iona and Peter Opie, William Wells Newell and some other recognizable names in the field. In addition, the use of internet-derived children's folklore material as well as the inclusion of a list of web resources in the appendix emphasizes emerging trends and avenues of research. The Handbook suggests further sources for investigation, including Youtube.com videos, movies and children's books.

In Chapter Two: Definitions and Classifications, Tucker's exploration of the terms and categories of children's folklore are usually accompanied by a brief listing of examples of each tale-type or game. These descriptions could be overwhelming if the reader is not already familiar with the subject. For example, Tucker mentions William Wells Newell's study of "Call-Ball" and describes it as resembling "the contemporary game of Spud" (p. 34), which may not be familiar to all readers. In addition, some of the broader definitions to key terms like "Childhood" and "Folklore" could be explored in greater depth. One of the potential difficulties with the Handbook is the separation between the Definitions and Classifications (Chapter Two) and the Examples and Texts (Chapter Three) sections. The division between the definitions and the detailed case studies is inconvenient when examining ethnic jokes as well as other topics and genres included in both chapters, since the reader must flip back and forth between them to understand the items in their full analytic and ethnographic context. Readers could be better served if the definition and examples were paired together in a single chapter, as it would aid them in distinguishing among the categories of children's folklore.

In the Scholarship and Approaches section (Chapter Four), Tucker describes past children's folklore research and lists potential lenses for future research, including the perspectives of performance, psychoanalysis, gender studies, spatial analysis, the supernatural, violence studies and cross-cultural research. She highlights Sutton-Smith's seven rhetorics of fate, power, communal identity, etc. as "possible directions for a new science of play for our current era" (p. 104). Despite this, the Handbook lacks information on ethnographic methods in children's folklore research. In its place, the Contexts section (Chapter Five) lists autobiographies, children's literature, film, television, toys, games and dolls as recommended media for exploring children's folklore without presenting the reader with rigorous methodologies for data collection among children and youth. As such, this presentation of sources would be beneficial to new folklore students who are not ready to go out in the field or who have limited time to analyze children's folklore texts. *Children's Folklore: A Handbook* provides a strong introduction to types of, and studies about, children's folklore. Tucker's attention to sexuality, violence and to the technological dispersion of children's folklore makes this a timely text to assign or recommend to novice or undergraduate students interested in the subject.