



the

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FOLKLORE NEWSLETTER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Anyone wishing to subscribe to the *Children's Folklore Newsletter* should send a check for \$5.00 to:

Sue Samuelson
614 S. 48th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19143

■ The children's folklore issue of the *Children's Literature Association Quarterly* should be available now. It includes articles by Kay Stone, Jill May, Brian Sutton-Smith, Edith Fowke, Linda Hughes, Mark West, John McDowell, Gary Fine, and Kate Rinzler. Anyone interested in a copy should write:

Patricia Dooley, Editor
ChLA Quarterly
525 - 86th Street, #7D
New York, NY 10028

■ *Them Days*, a journal devoted to stories of early life in Labrador has published an issue on children's folklore. It contains accounts of pastimes, holidays, riding, sledding, skiing, puzzles, rope and string games, cards, checkers, dominoes and dice, boats, target games, hide and seek, odds and ends, skating, balls, dolls, Christmas and New Year, occasions and events. Cost is \$2.50 and ask for volume 7, number 2. *Them Days*, Box 939, Stn. B. Happy Valley, Labrador, A0P 1E0 Canada. An exhibit of Labrador toys, games, and amusements organized by *Them Days* and the Art Gallery of the Memorial University of Newfoundland Extension Service will be presented in Goose Bay in December, 1981, in the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre in February, 1982, and then will travel throughout coastal communities in Labrador.

(continued on page 3)

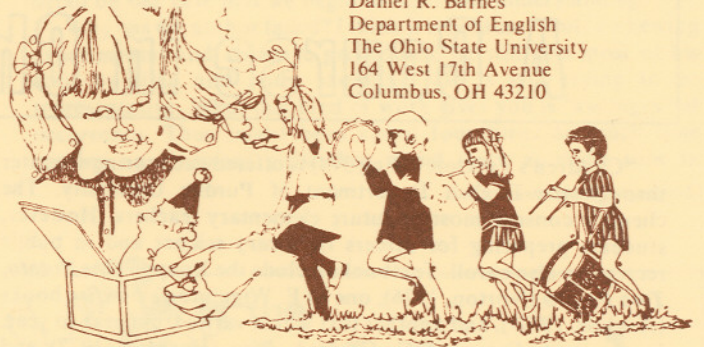
NOTES & QUERIES

■ I am compiling an annotated bibliography of folkgames scholarship and would appreciate hearing about any out-of-the-way and otherwise hard-to-find books and articles on the subject. Offprints of publications — especially very recent articles — would be gratefully received, since many journals for 1980 and 1981 are apt to be in my library's bindery. Please write:

Daniel R. Barnes
Department of English
The Ohio State University
164 West 17th Avenue
Columbus, OH 43210

■ Does anybody know where I can get hold of a fairly decent set of Lady Alice Gomme's *Traditional Games of England, Scotland, and Ireland*? I would be happy to pay a fair price for the Dover reprint (2 vols., 1964) — or even an earlier edition, if it is in reasonable shape.

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Children's Folklore Section Meeting

Minutes of the 1981 Meeting

The annual business meeting of the Children's Folklore Section was held on Friday, October 23, 1981, as a part of the American Folklore Society meetings in San Antonio, Texas. President Priscilla Ord called the meeting to order at 5:40 P.M. Those people attending introduced themselves and described their current interests in children's folklore. The officers of the Section gave their reports. Tom Johnson, vice-president, discussed possible Section-sponsored paper sessions at the 1982 meetings in Minneapolis. Sue Samuelson, secretary-treasurer, reported a balance

of \$812.90 in the Section's savings account and circulated a list of current subscribers to the Section's newsletter. Chip Sullivan, newsletter editor, reported on sizes and prices of issues, \$126 for postage for a 4-page issue, \$135 for a 6-page issue, and recommended adoption of the larger size. Contents of the upcoming issue were mentioned, including inclusion of some course syllabi. Complete sets of back issues are still available. Stationery has been printed for the use of officers for Section business. There was no archivist's report as Linda Hughes was unable to attend the meetings.

(continued on page 2)

Sylvia Grider mentioned the recent creation of an Australian children's folklore newsletter under the editorship of June Factor. The Australian newsletter is seeking bibliographies with a national focus. Brian Sutton-Smith discussed the TAASP newsletter, particularly the index compiled by Jan Rosenberg. He pointed out that the CFS should tap into the resources and membership of early childhood development researchers.

Under "Old Business" there was considerable discussion of the Section's possible publications. Weston Woods needs reviewers of its publications and recordings. Greenwood Press continues to make inquiries about various projects, especially a bibliography and a handbook. Priscilla supported an intensive effort to produce a bibliography, including culling folklore-related collections and articles from children's magazines (*Jack and Jill*, *St. Nicholas*). Gary Fine asked whether this bibliography was to be considered a Section project or an individual endeavor conducted with Section support. Jan Rosenberg noted that Greenwood's publications are generally very expensive, and Gary commented that all reference works are high priced but discounts might be available for CFS members. Jan suggested Norton as a possible publisher as they do the Winterthur papers, books from conferences, and TAASP materials. Linda Morley suggested the use of a 3-ring binder format with the bibliography possibly published in sections. Jay Mechling emphasized the need for a key words index and expressed his enthusiasm for a handbook project.

Gary suggested that an editor and two assistant editors be appointed to make some basic decisions on the format and report back to the Section. Priscilla agreed to serve in this capacity. Chip Sullivan volunteered to assist and Simon Bronner (who was not present at this time) was suggested as another assistant editor. Edith Fowke suggested putting the contents of the Library of Congress and *Western Folklore* children's folklore bibliographies onto index cards as a starting point for the bibliography; she also mentioned dividing the contents into sections, i.e., books and articles, authentic and secondary materials. Other key items to be considered for classification could be age, genres, and calendrical positions. Items for inclusion will be solicited via the newsletter. At the meeting a list was circulated for people wishing to comb the

children's magazines and professional journals for items. As head of the Publications Committee, Priscilla also agreed to investigate further the possible publication of a handbook.

Under "New Business" Priscilla Ord was re-elected as president and Linda Hughes as archivist. Items involving next year's meeting were discussed, such as the timing of the CFS business meeting. (This year's meeting was held during the dinner hour.) Priscilla suggested holding it at lunch and having box lunches available for the attendees.

The next topic of discussion was a competition for student papers on the topic of children's folklore. At Section-sponsored paper sessions at the annual AFS meetings two slots would be reserved for the best student (undergraduate and graduate) papers submitted in the previous year. A prize of \$50 would be given. A committee appointed by the vice-president would read the papers and select the winners. Priscilla and Tom volunteered to draft a letter to send to all departments with folklore courses to announce the competition and to also announce it in the CFS and AFS newsletters. Jay suggested that \$500 of the Section's money be put into a high-interest account in order to perpetually fund the prize. The Section voted to institute and fund the competition.

The issue of Section-sponsored paper sessions and panels was discussed further. Several kinds of sessions are possible including those composed of prepared papers, prepared remarks and discussion, and straight discussion. Tom Johnson, in his capacity as vice-president, will continue to explore the issue, especially in regards to AFS program requirements.

The Section adjourned at 7:10 P.M.

Addendum: An emergency meeting of the executive board of the Section was held at 10:30 P.M. on Saturday, October 24th to discuss the possibility of publishing a children's folklore handbook. Brian Sutton-Smith, Jay Mechling, and Tom Johnson volunteered to be advisors and to solicit contributions via the CFS and AFS newsletters.

Submitted by:

Sue Samuelson
Secretary-Treasurer

A Course in Children's Folklore

"Children's Folklore" (Eng 374) is offered each spring semester through the English Department of Purdue University. The clientele consists most of future elementary teachers. However, students preparing for careers in library science and in public recreation also enroll. Textbooks include the Knapps' *One Potato, Two Potato* (Norton, 1976), one of E. Wigginton's *Foxfire* books (Anchor, 1972-), and another text which varies from year to year. In the past, I've used C. Garvey's *Play* (Harvard, 1977) and S. McCosh's *Children's Humor* (Granada, 1976). The students take three exams and complete several short collecting assignments.

The course does not deal with literature written for children. A class offered through the Education Department meets that need. Instead "Children's Folklore" stresses traditions passed on orally (or though example) in children's peer group interaction. We examine the material for the light it sheds on youngsters' esthetic and cultural values (White, Black, Mexican-American, Native American). And we consider correspondences between the children's use of these traditions and their acquisition of communicational and social interactional skills. In treating these topics, I survey verbal as well as behavioral forms of folklore. As much as possible, the discussions are based on ethnographic studies and data, including my own transcripts of children's performance sessions. In addition to learning about children's folklore interests and competence, the students are also well served, I believe, with a sense of folkloristics as a discipline. The

latter is intended as more than an "ivory tower" exercise. Future teachers, librarians, etc., need to be aware of the strengths as well as the biases of the published children's folklore collections and studies that may become available to them. In addition to providing bibliographic material, therefore, I summarize the folkloristic perspectives which, during the past century, have contributed to our understanding of children's traditions.

The organization of the course reflects these historical and ethnographic concerns. The subject matter is divided among six units. In settling on the emphasis of and the descriptive terminology for each, I've been influenced by Helen Schwartzman's excellent volumes *Transformations: The Anthropology of Children's Play* (Plenum, 1978). A summary of what is covered in each of these sections follows.

Introduction. Most of the students taking English 374 have had no previous experience in folklore classes. At the beginning of the course, they understandably want clear-cut answers to what they feel are easily resolved questions: What is folklore? What are its origins? And, is it all "oldy-mouldy" tradition? We spend the first week or so on some partially efficient answers. First, examining selected nursery rhymes, we treat differences between historical speculation and the information that can be gleaned from the written records of traditional pieces. Secondly, the students complete a collecting assignment on family folklore. Through our class discussion of it, they learn about the modern-day currency and vitality of tradition.

(continued on page 3)