

From the Editor

With this volume, I proudly begin my service as editor of *Children's Folklore Review*. First and foremost, I thank the *CFR* board members for putting their trust in me, and I thank the previous editor, Brant Ellsworth, for his guidance and assistance during our transition. I am humbled by *CFR's* history, by the quality of scholars who have published in this journal, and by the excellence that permeates the journal's archives.

Folklorists' commitment to children's folklore remains imperative. Leaning into analogy, I often say that the study of children's folklore must be as important to folkloristics as the study of language acquisition is to linguistics. Humans develop in patterned ways, and those patterns include situated opportunities for acquiring and activating folkloric competence. We folklorists have an important role to play in the study of human development. That said, children's folklorists also understand that our work is not bound by positivism or adultocentrism. In children's folklore, timeless enigmas—creative/conservative, universal/particular, instrumental/expressive, sense/nonsense—abound. It is precisely because our subject is happily irrational and comfortably upending that we have our very own seat at the table of the interdisciplinary study of childhood. Our intention is to bear witness to children's expressivity—free from the restraints of experimental artificiality, numerical anonymity, and historical invisibility.

On point, the articles in this issue constitute excellent contributions toward, while reminding us of the core issues in, the study of children's folklore. I thank the authors for their stellar work and for their patience during *CFR's* transitional period. In his opening 2020 W.W. Newell Prize-winning essay, Fionnán Mac Gabhann considers a wealth of archival examples from Ireland, Britain, and the United States of the children's singing game, Roman Soldiers. Reminding us of the importance of archives, Mac Gabhann identifies in the children's mock battles a poignant commentary on the importance of community and reciprocity. The second article grew out of a 2019 American Folklore Society conference presentation on children's folklore by none other than Mary Twining, whose crucial fieldwork among the African-descended people of South Carolina and the Georgia Sea Islands reminds us that children's folklore points not toward triviality, but toward deep concerns in young people's lives. Third, 2020 Opie Prize winner Claiborne Rice's preliminary report on a fieldwork-based study of peekaboo reminds us that folklorists are prepared to consider—in grounded and richly philosophical ways—human development in the contexts of play, social interaction, and everyday experience. Lastly, 2018 Opie Prize and 2018 Chicago Folklore Prize winner

Jeanne Pitre Soileau highlights the lessons she has learned during her remarkable fifty years of collecting children's folklore in Louisiana. Specifically, Soileau reminds us that children and youths form their own responses to cultural propaganda by testing boundaries, exposing contradictions, and exacerbating otherness.

Please be advised that some of the children's folklore in this issue (and in our journal's archives) deals with difficult topics, including violence, drug use, sexuality, and racist language. Children, too, live in an imperfect world.

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