links. Yet it is surely pleasing, for "colonial" families to find the name of a saint who bulked large in the nature and thoughts of one's pioneering forebears. Quite atypical and overwhelming is the list (524) of saints' places in Cornwall.

Clearly David Hugh Farmer has given us a delightful catalogue of the virtuous, the obscure, and the incredible in the people's perception of morality and of martyrdom. It is hard to imagine that any curious (antiquarian) reader will relegate it to distant shelves, not least if he is concerned with figures who are now not merely part of greater European culture, but with the universality of Christian experience.

For folklorists the compilation is a peculiarly appropriate one, including as it does the selfless, the saintly, and those dedicated to the service of their fellows and their God in the byways of history, usually far from princes and their courts or "statesmen" and their necessitous wars and other dubious activities.

This volume is extraordinarily readable and incisively authoritative. For many it can and should be open windows on one of the essential experiences of humanity over the last two millennia.

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Gary Alan Fine. *Manufacturing Tales: Sex and Money in Contemporary Legends*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992. Pb 202 pp. Index. ISBN 0-87049-755-3.

Although, as Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith's *Bibliography* of 1993 shows, the number of published articles on contemporary legends has increased greatly over the last decade or so, the number of books on the subject is still very small. Even the publication of a volume of collected essays by a prolific writer on the topic is therefore very welcome, especially if that writer is Gary Alan Fine, long-time member of the Society that publishes this journal. In addition to providing an opportunity to evaluate his

articles on the subject as a corpus, the book under review also makes them easily accessible to those who do not happen to be subscribers to all the North American journals in which they have appeared: *Journal of American Folklore*, *New York Folklore*, *Western Folklore*, *Southern Folklore*, and *Journal of the Folklore Institute*. The volume, bringing together eleven articles published in these journals between 1979 and 1991, as well as an extensive "Introduction" by the author, is a felicitous collection, insofar as it receives its integrity and cohesion from Fine's particular perspective and from his unmistakable "voice"; it is therefore more than just an anthology of what one scholar happens to have written over a period of a dozen years. It is, for that reason alone, not surprising that, in recognition of its special worth, the book has been included in the New Series of the Publications of the American Folklore Society.

As is to be expected, the author's "Introduction" (pp. 1–42) initially and inevitably concerns itself with a definition of the genre. Terminologically, Fine prefers a temporal reference to a geographical one and therefore has opted for the use of "contemporary" rather than "urban" legends. He also proposes a very useful operational definition, taking into account the nature of the genre both as performance and as text: "a "contemporary legend' is a narrative that a teller presents to an audience in the context of their relationship. The text is an account of a happening in which the narrator or an immediate personal contact was not directly involved, and is presented as a *proposition for belief*; it is not always believed by speaker or audience, but it is presented as something that *could* have occurred and is told as *if* it happened" (p. 2). He also acknowledges the close relationship between legend and rumour, and singles out as crucial variables in the dynamics of contemporary legends: social structure, personal imperatives, situated dynamics, and narrative content. These he examines in considerable detail but posits that "formal characteristics of the text have little descriptive power" (p. 2), a claim one might be inclined to question, especially in view of the fact that he takes the notion of "texture" very seriously in the analysis of the kind of stories he is examining. It is also difficult to imagine that the "four components of the content of contemporary legends"—the details of the legend, its themes, its moral structure, and its function in contemporary society—which he discusses quite fully (pp. 27–32) are not associated with some

discernable formal structure. In general, however, one can only applaud the lucid effectiveness of his "guide to the components of the contemporary legend that need to be studies" and of the "framework" which Fine's thoughtful "Introduction" offers.

The eleven articles assembled in this collection are not arranged in chronological order but in four conceptual groupings under the headings: Sexual Fantasies, Dangerous Products, Dangerous Capitalism, and Corporate Redemption. These give faithful and informative expression to Fine's impressive range of interpretative approaches without ever losing sight of their central and recurrent concerns which reflect his sociological as well as folkloristic thinking if, in fact, it can be said that these two perspectives are separable in his case. These groupings are also undoubtedly helpful in the construction of the kind of overview to which Fine subjects the phenomenon which is called "Contemporary Legend" in his "Introduction", lending substance to his arguments and illustrating his basic assumptions. In their separate, though interconnected, categories they do, however, not reflect the processes by which this overview has been achieved, from the essay on "Cokelore and Coke Law" of 1979 to the paper on "Redemption Rumors and the Power of Ostension" of 1991, and by which this edifice has been built up brick by brick. This reviewer, being personally aware of Fine's growing interest in, and increasingly sensitive probings of, contemporary legends over the years, has therefore taken the perhaps unwarranted step to restore to the eleven essays their original chronological sequence, thus gauging both the gradual evolution of the framework and the increasing influence of Fine's thinking on what has become a considerable pre-occupation of scholars in several fields of research. When rearranged in the original order of their composition, or at least of their publication, the essays can also be seen as responses to specific, predominant concerns at any given time, both in the legends narrated and in the minds of those who study them. Twelve years are, after all, a long time in such a rapidly developing field of research into a genre so closely linked with particular narrative manifestations of human anxieties and aspirations.

Thus the "Welcome to the Worlds of AIDS" essay of 1987, with its undertones of "Fantasies of Female Revenge" could hardly have been written much earlier, and the three articles first published in 1979 and 1980 and now grouped together under the

heading "Dangerous Products" reflected greater innovative thinking then than they would now. Fine's important contributions to the study of mercantile legends and the power, perceived threat, and vulnerability of large and anonymous corporations, studies for which he is probably best known now, are clearly later extensions of much more rudimentary and more fragmented pieces of investigation in the earlier stages of the author's attention to contemporary legends. While it would be too simplistic to chart what might be termed "Fine's Progress" as a journey from "Cokelore" to "Corporate Redemption Rumors", it is nevertheless significant and understandable that the journey in question should have had this point of departure and that (temporary) destination. Since the author also obviously reads what others have to say on the subjects which interest him, his bibliographies, notes, and citations are illuminating witnesses to what people "in the field" considered worth investigating and interpreting at the time when each essay was written.

Not to be overlooked, however, is the grounding of every theory advanced, of every hypothesis offered, of every interpretation suggested, and of every conclusion reached in solid evidence diligently collected and meticulously recorded from specific informants and sources, a methodology which is both sound and worth imitating. Indeed, the progress from individual, potentially isolated, verifiable items to persuasive generalisations may be said to underlie practically all the essays collected in the book under review. That these generalisations are the result of particular, sometimes unique, filtering processes is to their advantage rather than their detriment. After all, this is Gary Alan Fine's book and not somebody else's, and it represents convincingly the very niche which he has carved for himself in contemporary legend research; but even in the selection of its topics and the choice of its approaches it transcends the purely personal and draws attention to some of the most important facets of that ubiquitous and most productive folk-narrative genre—the contemporary legend.

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