new building. Ade is at his best, one eyebrow raised, as he reveals the contiguous layers of "culture" that the advent of new institutions like the Art Institute laid on an older Chicago—"An occasional bell or whistle on the Illinois Central tracks interrupts for a moment, but the rattle of wheels on Michigan Avenue seems a long distance away"—while he exposes the pretensions of the new cultural connoisseur who, "As she would doubtless put it... is going in for art, and it's perfectly lovely" (pp. 190-91, "In Chicago But Not of It," 1912).

Ade's essays on Indiana draw on the same consciousness of change, on the strains of the transition from rural to urban. Ade parodies Hoosier defensiveness at the same time as he demonstrates his own defensive partisanship. Assertions like "the Indiana man respects his state because it has grown to importance and wealth without acquiring a double chin or wearing a wrist watch" (p. 205, "Indiana," 1922) both expose and take pride in provincialism's stubborn resistance. Ade is clearly mocking himself in "The Hoosier Hand Book" (1911) when he mocks a limited, rural Indiana left behind by urbanization: "Far be it from any native Hoosier to jeer at the huckleberry, the ne plus ultra pie-filler of the civilized world" (p. 208). Yet if Ade parodies, in the same essay, the determined boosterism of towns like Indianapolis struggling to compete with Chicago ("Population last year, 233,650. Population today and tomorrow, 500,000," p. 215), it is equally clear that he also feels something for the human intimacy of the "Home of... The Largest Hearted People in the World" (p. 215) that he does not feel for real urban centers.

In short, this collection displays a knowing, witty George Ade who both recognized and directly experienced the self-conscious eagerness and the hesitation which cultural change called forth from turn-of-the-century America.

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Extraordinary, sensational, or change-producing events in a community's history often become the subjects of local legendry that transforms history (act) into story (art). The more deeply an event strikes at the roots of a community's identity, structure, and world view, the more complex and tenacious will be the legends that evolve around it, for legends function as commentary on the meaning of events for community members. That is, leg-
ends not only recount what happened they also express people’s evaluations of and attitudes toward what happened. As those judgments change with the passage of time, so will legends about the event change in a continual process of reinterpreting the past in light of the present. A case in point is the body of legends surrounding the multiple murders apparently committed by Belle Gunness on her La Porte, Indiana, farm just after the turn of the twentieth century. In this book folklorist Janet L. Langlois undertakes the documentation of the role of the Belle Gunness legend complex as a reflector of the community’s view of itself and its past.

Readers who are simply looking for a retelling of the Belle Gunness story will not find it here. Instead, Langlois focuses on how various aspects of the Gunness legend have been shaped and reshaped by the popular press, local historians, and ordinary citizens at different times over the past seventy-some years. The book, therefore, “becomes more a record of people coping with the Belle Gunness phenomenon through the symbolic medium of folk art [i.e., legend] than a record of the murderess herself” (p. 9). In taking this approach Langlois is consistent with her own position that the most significant feature of the legend complex is its ability to reinterpret Belle Gunness and her deeds continually through the years, so that presenting the story as a connected narrative would be to betray the vitality and flexibility of the living oral tradition upon which Langlois relies heavily for her source material. Each of the six chapters in the book deals with how a particular aspect of the legend reflects a corresponding value or structural element in the community’s life (e.g., Belle Gunness as an independent woman in a traditionally ordered society).

In spite of this analytical rather than descriptive scheme of organization, by the end of the book the reader has a pretty good idea of what happened—or what probably happened. The heart of the legend complex—what lends it force and keeps it alive—is the uncertainty, even contradiction, that surrounds every facet of the events in Belle Gunness’s life, from the number of people she supposedly killed to her motives for the murders to her very identity as a woman.

Although Langlois is not always convincing in the connections she draws between the legend complex and the social, economic, and psychosexual tenor of the community, her arguments provoke thought about the intimate, inescapable relationship between history and folklore. Her study not only affords a good model for looking at local history from a folkloristic point of view but it also validates the very real ability of folkloristic research
to contribute to a larger understanding both of the past and of the means by which society tries to comprehend it.

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In July, 1943, shortly after his graduation from Wirt High School in Gary, Indiana, eighteen-year-old C. Thomas Krueger enlisted in the United States Navy, becoming one of the more than fifteen million men and women to serve in America's armed forces during World War II. Taking his basic training at Camp Peary, Virginia, Krueger joined the "Seabees," a special division of the navy organized to build military bases in combat areas. Following advanced instruction in Virginia and Rhode Island, Krueger was shipped to the Pacific Theater, where he worked on various construction projects in New Guinea and the Philippines.

During the twenty-eight months he spent away from home, Krueger wrote nearly two hundred letters to his family describing his transformation into a "Seabee" and his experiences overseas. The young seaman possessed a facile pen and a sense of humor, and his letters were both informative and entertaining. Discovered in 1984 at a demolition site, the Krueger letters were saved from destruction to be published as the first volume in the Calumet Regional Studies Series sponsored by Indiana University Northwest.

Skinning Cats is a fresh and candid look at what it meant to be an American sailor in World War II. Not unexpectedly, Krueger complained a lot about navy food, overbearing officers, and other service hardships. However, his letters also provide rich insights into navy training, midwestern racial and sexual attitudes, and the mechanics of wartime censorship. Though he saw no combat, Krueger was stationed close enough to the front to be menaced by Japanese booby traps, airplanes, and misdirected artillery shells.

The book's major weaknesses are weak editing and the lack of an index. James B. Lane and Stephen G. McShane contributed a suitable introduction and a handful of helpful notes, but they neglected to explain the service jargon and wartime slang that clutter the letters. The reader born after 1945 might guess that "Frankie Glamour Pants" was Frank Sinatra and "Moose-