

Indiana University

Folklore
Institute

Traditions

Alumni News

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College of Arts & Sciences Alumni Association

Spring 1992

New chair addresses the centrality of Folklore

Names and faces may change, but institutions possess a remarkable tenacity. This year, we welcome Linda Dégh as Distinguished Professor Emeritus. And as many of you know, Richard Bauman returns to civilian life leaving me to tend the wants and needs of the department. It is a glorious task requiring loads of patience and tact and conferring reward in the guise of a sense of accomplishment when things go well, as they generally do amongst this friendly crowd.

I trust you will be convinced as you peruse this attractive edition of *Traditions* that the Folklore Institute faculty, students, and staff continue to assess and assert the centrality of folklore in these perplexing times. There is no finer faculty dedicated to this task anywhere in the world. And year after year, we find ourselves blessed with a robust cadre of talented and enthusiastic students. Moreover, our secretarial staff manages a smooth flow of paperwork between our place and the administrative offices.

Some of you may not know that we have revived the monograph series in the form of Special Publications of the Folklore Institute. The first issue, *Native Latin American Cultures Through Their Discourse*, was edited by Ellen Basso of the University of Arizona and contains articles on myths and oratory in several indigenous communities of Latin America. The second issue, *Reflections on a Folklife Festival: An Ethnography of Participant Experience*, is now at the printer. A third monograph, consisting of essays on labor song, compiled by Archie Green, is in production. If you would like to obtain a copy of some or all of these (and future publications as well), you should contact

Indiana University Press, which has taken over promotion and distribution of the series.

There are many other things afoot (as you will see in these very pages), so rest assured that your alma mater remains a veritable cauldron of folkloristic intrigue. Let me close by asking each of you to send along (in the space

provided on p. 5) news of your whereabouts and your activities, as well as any thoughts or suggestions that you have for us. We are anxious to know what people are thinking and doing.

—Cheers,
John H. McDowell
Department Chair

Did You Know . . . ?

Folklore graduate students over the past year have been doing fieldwork in France, Mali, and Nicaragua. Two graduate students are currently do-

ing fieldwork in Harare, Zimbabwe, while others are in Canada and Korea; one student is about to leave for six weeks in Cuba.



The incoming crop of graduate students, who began in fall 1991, are ready to join the ranks of Folklore achievers. See p. 3 for a list of recently conferred Folklore degrees.

Richmond translates book for 1994 winter Olympics

Young Heming, he skied down Snara,
His skis they shrieked in the turns,
To everyone who watched him do so,
He skied as a falling star burns.

Young Heming, he skied down Snara,
His skis shrieked as they sped,
He seized the king by his shoulder bone,
And tore his garment to shreds.

Young Heming he skied down Snara,
His skis shrieked upon snow,
He seized the king by his shoulder bone,
And thrust his nose to the snow.

Then it was Young Heming,
Who turned to the king once more,
"If this contest were not enough,
I have plenty more in store."

—stanzas 4-7, "Heming og Harald Kongjen" E3 in *The Types of the Scandinavian Ballad*, W.E. Richmond, in collaboration with Mortan Nolsøe, ed. by Bengt Jonsson, Eva Danielson, and Soale Solheim.



Edson and Betty Richmond, center of boat, enjoy white water rafting in Colorado.

Little did Edson Richmond know when he researched these verses—about an 11th-century Norwegian peasant and King Harald Hardrade who contest in skiing—that his interests in folklore and skiing would again converge. Richmond is now translating Olaf Bø's *Skiing Traditions in Norway* for the 1994 winter Olympics to be held in Lillehammer, Norway.

Richmond's enthusiasm for skiing dates to his childhood years in New Hampshire and has influenced his children. After he and his wife, Betty, took their sons to Colorado to ski every year while the boys were growing up, one son decided to settle permanently in Colorado. Skiing is only one of Richmond's recreational interests; he and Betty also enjoy white water rafting and frequently sail.

Richmond first knew Olaf Bø when both were folklorists at the University of Oslo in the 1950s. It was then that Richmond first began translating some of Bø's writing. Bø, who has been knighted by the Norwegian king for his work on tradition, is now a director of the Ski Museum in Oslo.

Richmond recalls the ski trips that he and Bø shared, commenting that he still prefers to watch downhill, or slalom, skiing more than the recent trend of "hot-dogging," or "ski ballet." Perhaps Richmond's historical perspective renders sophisticated equipment and

the tricks they allow unimpressive; skill and expertise are nothing new.

"Another ballad about Heming," says Richmond, "notes that he was such an excellent skier that he was hired to ski into the mountains to save the life of a princess who had been kidnapped by trolls." The Heming ballads have been collected since at least 1850, and the cultural value of skiing in Norway found expression long before even the 19th century.

"Skiing existed in Norway from at least as early as 4,000 B.C. There were cave drawings found in Rodoy in Helgeland as early as this date, and these are presently being used as models both for recent Norwegian postage stamps and also for the logos to be used for the 1994 winter Olympic games."

The path that Richmond's work has followed has been partly the result of "serendipitous experiences." In the 1940s, Richmond, then newly appointed to the English department, was asked by Stith Thompson, when he learned that Richmond's dissertation had been on place names in the ballad, to teach a graduate course on the ballad. A few years later, Richmond received a Fulbright to study the organization of the Norwegian Archives, his second choice to ballad study in Scot-

land. "It took about a month," he says after which he spent the remainder of his time in Norway looking into some ballad manuscripts collected in the 1850s by Sophus Bugge, the first professor of folklore at the University of Oslo. He notes, "I've been working on them ever since."

The collection is unique in that Bugge's successor, Moltke Moe, collected ballads from the singer's daughter 40 years later. Richmond is using the collection to study the relationship between memory and ballads.

Richmond's years of association with Scandinavian folklorists have provided him with a unique perspective on Scandinavian folklore. The study of folklore in Scandinavia as everywhere tends to be nationalistic: Swedish archives contain Swedish folklore and Norwegian archives contain Norwegian folklore, and, says Richmond, "never the twain shall meet."

Humor reflects this awareness of national pride. Richmond recalls a Hagar cartoon in which Hagar's little boy asks, "When people ask me what I am, Daddy, what should I tell them, am?" Hagar says, "A Viking." The boy asks, "Why not a Norwegian?" Hagar replies, "They'd think you were boasting."

(continued on page 3)

Globetrotting with Linda Dégh

This spring again finds Linda Dégh in the classroom as she serves as visiting professor at UCLA, teaching an undergraduate course in Folklore and the Mass Media and a graduate course on Popular Legend. On returning to the Midwest, she will attend a meeting of the Popular Culture Association in Bowling Green. Along with faculty member Greg Schrempp, she will then journey to Innsbruck, where she will deliver a paper, "The Worldview of the Folktale," at the 10th International Congress of Folk Narrative Research.

Dégh's travels have not deterred her

from publishing. *American Folklore and the Mass Media* is in press at IU, and she plans to complete *Legend and Belief: The Dialectics of a Folklore Genre* by the end of 1992. Her article "Improvisation" appears in *Encyklopadie des Marchens* (1991, v. 7/1: 103-109). "What is a Legend After All" appears in the 1991 issue of *Contemporary Legend* (v.1, pp. 11-38), and "The Legend Conduit" will appear in Simon Bronner's *Creativity and Tradition in Folklore* (AFS, 1992). Dégh has been invited to join the advisory board of the *Encyclopedia of Folklore Study* (Garland Press).

Folklore degree conferred from May 1991 to April 1992

BA Degrees

- Tara Healy
- Sharon D. Koomler
- Heather Swain

MA Degrees

- Harry Berger, "Armloads of Crystals: A General Theory of Music and Emotion"
- Charles Frederick
- Flora Ntsihlele, "Women's Work Songs as an Expressive Medium in Lesotho"
- Arzu Ozturkmen, "A Summary of Folk Dance Revival in Turkey"
- Gil Peterson
- Clover Nolan Williams

PhD Degrees

- Mary Dart, "Contra Dance Choreography: A Reflection of Social Change"
- Cheryl L. Keyes, "Rappin' to the Beat: Rap Music As Street Culture Among African Americans"
- Janet Laude, "Folklore as an Instrument of Stigma, Folklore as an Instrument of Liberation: The Case of Lesbian Semiotics"
- Patricia Mastick Young, "Log, Stone and Board, and Batten Cabins of the Southern California Mountains: A Study of the Interplay Between Techniques and Popular Aesthetics in Folk Architecture"

Richmond translates book for Olympics

(continued from page 2)

Scandinavian folklorists also maintain an abiding interest in international folkloric work. Richmond stresses that their international interest is the source of their admiration for the Folklore Collection at IU's library, which is headed by librarian Polly Grimshaw, whose expertise in managing the collection keeps it up to date and accessible. Richmond cites Lauri Honko, Reidar Christiansen, Olaf Bø, Bengt Jølbek, Orvar Löfgren, and Reimund Kvideland as being among the foremost Scandinavian folklorists who pursue interests in international folklore.

Richmond's work in Scandinavian

folklore has always complemented his other work on the history of the English language and on ballad scholarship in general. His recent book, *Ballad Scholarship* (1989), was a much-needed annotated bibliography encompassing both American and European scholarship.

When Richmond completes his translation of Bø's *Skiing Traditions in Norway*, he and his wife will travel to the East Coast where they will crew a 33-foot boat from Maryland to Maine. He is seriously thinking of writing a history of skiing in North America when they return.

Public-sector resident program planned

The Folklore Institute and the American Folklore Society are sponsoring an annual public-sector folklorist-in-residence program beginning this fall. Its two goals are to provide public-sector folklorists with the opportunity for research time and to nurture a sense of common background and cause among academic and public-sector folklorists. During the residency period, IU faculty and students and the resident will have a chance to share ideas and experiences in classrooms, colloquiums, and more informal social occasions.

Individuals with MA or PhD degrees in folklore, ethnomusicology, or related fields, who are employed in public-sector folklore are eligible to apply.

The residency carries a \$1,000 stipend, plus travel and campus lodging expenses up to \$1,000, may be taken any time between Oct. 1, 1992, and April 1, 1993, and can vary in length from 10 days to two weeks.

For information, please call Inta Carpenter at 812/855-8049. For an application, write to IU/AFS Public Sector Folklorist-in-Residence, Folklore Institute, 504 N. Fess, Bloomington, IN 47405.

Traditions

Traditions is published by the Indiana University Alumni Association, in cooperation with the Folklore Institute and the College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Association, to encourage alumni interest in and support for IU.

Folklore Institute

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Faculty update

Dick Bauman will spend this year as a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences at Stanford. He will be finishing the book he and Charles Briggs are writing on poetics and performance and continuing work on Mexican nativity plays. Oxford Press has just released his edited book, *Folklore, Culture Performances, and Popular Entertainment*. A monograph by Bauman, Patricia Sawin, and Inta Carpenter, *Reflections on the Folklore Festival: An Ethnography of Participant Experience*, is about to be released.

Mary Ellen Brown ended six years as director of women's studies last July, spent two months at Middlebury in a French immersion program, followed by six months in Paris on sabbatical, and is back now in Folklore. Currently teaching one course, she is working on a study of William Motherwell and ballad taste as recipient of a Mid-Career/Senior Faculty Fellowship, which will take her to Scotland in early fall.

John Johnson has been awarded a 1992 IU Bloomington Summer Faculty Fellowship and a grant-in-aid, which he will use to continue the work he has done this year under a Lilly Open Fellowship. He and Alain Barker, a graduate student in music, will be using a computer "to attempt to discern the relationship between scansion and words/semantics in Somali poems." The computer will enable them to analyze in two months material that previously took two years to analyze. In the fall he will be teaching a colloquium on this topic for folklore and ethnomusicology students.

John McDowell has just returned from UCLA, where he delivered an invited talk on "Deconstructing the Folklor(ist) Sign" to members and friends of the Folklore and Mythology Program there. His *So Wise Were Our Elders*, a companion volume to *Sayings of the Ancestors*, is in press with the University of Kentucky. McDowell continues to work on the interaction of poetry and violence in the ballad materials he has collected during fieldwork visits to Guerrero, in Mexico.

Warren Roberts has completed an article on the makers of wooden carpenters' planes, to be published in *Midwest Folklore*. *The Tale of the Kind and Unkind Girls*, originally published in Berlin in 1958, is being republished by Wayne State Press as the first in a series of "Classics of Folklore Research."



Professor Beverly Stoeltje, center, and Professor Sandy Dolby, holding guitar, pose with members of Stoeltje's American Folklore class (F131), along with Als Theresa Vaughn and Greg Kelley, left of Stahl.

Greg Schrempp's *Magical Arrows: The Maori, the Greeks, and the Folklore of the Universe* has just been released by University of Wisconsin Press.

Beverly Stoeltje recently organized a presentation on folklore and nationalism, titled "Imaginary Communities: Interdisciplinary and International Perspectives," in association with the IU visit of Benedict Anderson, author of *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. The special session included folklore students Theresa Vaughan, speaking on "Unimaginable Revolutionaries: Women and Nationalism in Ireland," Ramenga Osotsi, speaking on "Nationalism and the Sundiata Epic," and Ana Maria Ochoa, speaking on "Identity and the New Song Movement in Columbia." These were framed by talks by Telecommunications Professor Michael Curtin, on "International Media," and Political Science Professor C.R.D. Halisi, on "Populism in South Africa." This spring, Stoeltje is teaching the African studies Wednesday night seminar, for which six visiting scholars from the U.S. and Africa are delivering lectures on their research relating to African women and power. The Multidisciplinary Ventures Fund awarded Stoeltje \$500 for the seminar.

Ruth Stone will be in Saudi Arabia this summer and fall to research music of the expatriot community. She will be studying ways in which music evokes ideas of home. Her article on the Kpelle script "Ingenious Invention" has just been published in *Liberian Studies Journal*.

In memoriam

We note with sadness the death of folklorist Greta Swenson on Jan. 18, at age 41.

After completing her PhD at Indiana University, Swenson launched a career that was productive, but tragically brief, as a folklorist. In the late 1970s, working for Ashland College, she documented folk life along Lake Superior in Wisconsin. She was a pioneer folklorist, collecting on the Iron Range for the Minnesota Folklife Center. Later, she served as folklorist for the North Dakota Arts Council.

In recent years, persistent illness prevented her from holding a steady job. She returned to her home town of Linsborg, Kan. From her base in Linsborg, she devoted herself to devising projects and seeking funding for them, both national and regional in scope. One of her projects was the collection of Swedish and Swedish-American examples of decorative candelabra, *ljuskrona*, or light crowns. The exhibit toured to several locations.

The day after her death, Swenson's parents insisted that she would want a concert she had arranged go on as scheduled. A candle was burned in her honor throughout the concert.

Alumni update

Barry Jean Ancelet, MA'77, associate professor of French and Francophone studies and director of the Center for Acadian and Creole Folklore at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, Lafayette, is developing an interest in feminist issues following the birth of his daughter after four sons.

Silvester J. Brito, PhD⁷⁵, received a Senior Fulbright to Mexico for 1989-90. During summer 1991, he was at Purdue University on a minority fellowship, working on a book on Mexican-American folk medicine.

Simon J. Bronner, PhD'81, has been named Distinguished Professor of folklore and American studies by Pennsylvania State University. He was also awarded the Opie Prize from the American Folklore Society for his book *American Children's Folklore*.

Frank A. de Caro, PhD'73, an English professor at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, has had his book, *Folklife in Louisiana Photography: Images of Tradition*, published by the university's press.

Bruce M. Harrah-Conforth, MA'84, PhD'90, of Bloomington, is director of curatorial and educational affairs at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, Cleveland, Ohio.

Gail Vigeant Sangster Matthews, MA'84, PhD'89, who works as project coordinator for the South Carolina Arts Commission, was recently married and is living in Columbia, S.C.

Denise Sharp Rockwell, BA'77, MS'79, of Austin, Texas, received her bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Texas and is a school nurse for the Austin School District.

Susan L. Scheiberg, BA'84, works in the folklore and myth program at the University of California, Los Angeles.

John W. Schiffeler, MA'74, of San Francisco, Calif., has been invited by the Chinese Academy of Science to view an archaeological dig in Shanxi Province. The subject matter of the dig will be the basis for one of his lecture courses at Dominican College, where he teaches.

Sharon R. Sherman, PhD'78, continues to direct the folklore program at the University of Oregon, Eugene, and has released her latest video production, *Spirits in the Wood: The Chainsaw Art of Skip Armstrong*.

Cultural Basics: Educating with the Grain

The Folklore Institute, in conjunction with the School of Education, the Center on History-Making in America, and the Indiana Council for the Social Studies, is sponsoring Cultural Basics: Educating with the Grain, a conference on folklore and history-making in the classroom, to be held on the Bloomington campus on June 19-20.

Speakers for this cross-disciplinary forum of folklorists, educators, teachers, and historians include Betty Belanus, Shirley Brice Heath, Henry Glassie, Hope Jensen Leichter, Gail Matthews-DeNatale, and William W. Wiggins.

For more information call or write:

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Bloomington, IN 47405
812/855-0043



Alumni and friends are welcome. We look forward to seeing you there.
Woodblock prints from Charles Camp, *American Foodways* (Little Rock, Ark.: August House, 1984)

Tell us what you think . . .

Help us give you a better newsletter: Fill out these two questionnaires and return them to the address below. *Many thanks!*

Class note form

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Your news _____

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Ohemmaa Na Kyekyere Oman

It is the queenmother who builds the nation.

—Akan proverb, Twi language

International research has become an interactive process in the modern world. This past year, our faculty engaged in African research have hosted a number of African leaders and scholars and expanded the African holdings at the ATM, in addition to their usual research activities. The Queenmother of Adamrobe (located in Aburi-Akuapem) in Ghana presented the final lecture of the Woman and Power in Africa seminar (taught by Beverly Stoeltje and Paula Girshick), titled "A Queenmother at the United Nations and the International Community." She lives in New York City, where she is affiliated with the U.N. and works with international organi-

zations concerned with women refugees and human rights, such as the U.N. Development Fund for Women and the Women's Commission on Refugee Women in Africa. She is president of the African Human Rights Organization. Simultaneously, she holds the position of ohemmaa (queenmother) in her community in Ghana, and she travels there several times a year to carry out her duties. She holds a bachelor's degree in sociology and a master's degree in anthropology.

Other Ghanaian visitors were the participants in the USIA exchange between the University of Ghana and IU on the topic of performance. These included: Kwesi Yankah, an IU PhD

alumnus in Folklore, Francis Nii Yartey, director of the Ghana National Dance Ensemble, and Takyiwa Manuh, a lawyer and women's studies scholar from the Institute of African Studies. Manuh gave a lecture, titled "Women's Exercise of Power and the Law," for the Women and Power in Africa seminar.

Mary Esther Kropp Dakubu, director of the Language Center at the University of Ghana, will be teaching



Nana Boakyewa Yiadom I, queenmother of Adamrobe in Aburi-Akuapem, lectures in the Hoagy Carmichael Room of the IMU on the Bloomington campus on April 22.

"Language in Africa," in the first summer session. Dakubu has published on the folktale in Africa and on the xylophone, in addition to her linguistic research.

Folklore Institute faculty who have been or will be going to Ghana on the exchange include Dick Bauman, Ruth Stone, John McDowell, and Beverly Stoeltje, who is director of the exchange.

In addition to the Ghanaian exchange, the Institute has been involved in African research in other ways this past year. Ron Smith is currently at the University of Malawi in Zomba as part of a teaching exchange, and Christopher Kamlongera, of the University of Malawi, will be at IU this fall. John Johnson's work on Somalian poetry will further our understanding of the relationship between structure and performance. Also, the ATM is in the process of arranging for accession of the Svend Holsoe Collection of materials on Liberia.

Thompson Liberation Front strikes again

Folklore students recently took it upon themselves to transform the folklore AI offices into "Lady Gregory's Salon," the folkloric equivalent of a Thespian's Green Room. The Thompson Liberation Front officially sanctioned the students' efforts by gracing the newly scrubbed and refurbished space with Stith's bust. A note found in the Dorson Reading Room, where the bust had previously resided, read:

If you myth this bust of Stith
Rest assured it's friends he's with
From your panic please refrain
He will soon appear again

Thompson Liberation Front

Stith likes his new residence but still wishes he could loosen his tie.

The new folklore student lounge has also benefited from a very generous donation towards the purchase of books for the new bookshelves. The gift came from Henry Glassie.

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IU at AFS

All alumni are invited to the annual IU reception at the AFS meetings in Jacksonville, Fla., in October.

We hope to see you there!