

piece sometimes turns apologetic. Ironically, this is one of the few original contributions to the collection. Margaret K. Brady provides an interesting analysis of Mormon women's visionary experiences related to reproductive decisions (published previously in *Journal of American Folklore* 100:461–8, 1987). Again, due to Mormonism's emphasis on marriage and family, a study of oral histories on family planning revelations is a welcome inclusion.

"Part 4: Pioneers, Heroes, and the Historical Imagination" presents five more chapters, this time centered on Mormon folktales and stories. The highlight of this section is probably Richard C. Poulsen's study on the folktales about what happened to Joseph Smith's murderers later in life. Eliason, who includes his own paper in this section, offers an entry on the use of pioneer stories in Mormon culture. Any reader familiar with nineteenth-century Mormon history would also enjoy Gustive O. Larson's sketch of Orrin Porter Rockwell as Mormon folk hero.

"Part 5: Humor" is limited to just four chapters, each focusing on the lighthearted jokes and stories told among Mormons. Jan Harold Brunvand writes about how common nursery rhymes, songs, and stories were modified to fit the Mormon experience. Wallace Stegner offers an entertaining study on J. Golden Kimball, a Mormon leader who was known for his humor and colorful expressions.

"Part 6: Beyond Deseret" concludes the anthology with four essays related to Mormonism outside of North America. Three of the chapters concentrate on Mormon missionary experiences. Mormon missionaries are probably the most visible signifiers of Mormonism to anyone outside of the faith. A quick look on Twitter will reveal numerous tweets about "the Mormons are knocking on my door" or "I just spotted two Mormons on their bikes." The perception reflects a common conflation of missionaries with the entire body of Mormon believers. Even though missionaries only make up less than half of 1 percent of total LDS Church membership at any given time, the white shirt and black name tag generate an unmistakable brand that establishes a prevalent image of Mormonism. In this section, the missionary chapters focus primarily on North American missionaries' experiences as the foreign Other, rather than on

Mormon folklore by or about Mormons outside of the United States and Canada. The final essay in the collection, by Grant Underwood, delivers more on this section's promise of international Mormon folklore, as Underwood relates how Maori traditions influenced their acceptance of Mormonism.

*Latter-Day Lore* is a respectable reference on Mormon folklore, and I found many delightful insights in the book. One might quibble over the contemporaneity of the articles included. Of the 28 chapters, only three are newly published original studies. Considering the project the editors set out to do, this should come as no surprise. It was not their intention to offer new research in Mormon Folklore but "to produce a collection of Mormon folklore scholarship that represents seminal works and important areas of study past and present" (p. 19). I believe they succeeded in their objective. Ultimately, the gap this book fills is something akin to a college professor's course reading packet. This anthology would make an ideal textbook for a class on Mormon Folklore.

Mormonism as a faith and as a culture will continue to evolve. *Latter-Day Lore* is an important addition to Mormon folklore studies, creating a foundation of key articles in the field. Recommended to Mormon and non-Mormon folklorists alike, this collection will rest on scholars' shelves as evidence that Mormons have a rich religious, social, and cultural heritage.

**Stories of Our Lives: Memory, History, Narrative.** By Frank de Caro. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2013. Pp. xv + 215, acknowledgments, preface, afterword, author bio, 16 photos, 3 prints.)

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In many respects, the title of this book is misleading. It is really a memoir—the story of Frank de Caro's life as it is informed by stories. In other respects, because the book presents a range of stories and examines their roles in society and their uses and meanings for individuals, the book speaks to larger issues of the nature of stories and storytelling. This discus-

sion and analysis are present throughout the book, but are especially notable in the afterword, entitled "Contexts and Meanings."

The first four chapters detail family history on both sides of de Caro's family; thus there are stories of immigration and Americanization, of how grandparents met, of several generations of the family vacationing in the same house. In addition, de Caro shares a number of stories about the neighborhood where he grew up, so that we learn about local characters, traditional games, and nicknames of subway trains. There are also a number of stories about the scene in the East Village of the 1960s, where de Caro had an apartment, and of his experiences as a social worker.

Stories also frame de Caro's educational experiences, so that we hear about friends and locations associated with prep school and graduate school at Johns Hopkins in creative writing, that also influenced the kind of writing and storytelling that de Caro would do. There is also an entire chapter devoted to de Caro's doctoral studies in folklore at Indiana University, where we hear stories about fellow folklorists—including his future wife, Rosan Jordan.

While family stories comprise nearly half of the chapters, stories about India also mark both significant parts of the book and phases in the author's life. The first chapter of the book is nearly evenly divided between stories about his mother's side of the family and discussion of de Caro's fieldwork in England and Ireland with men and women who had served in the Indian Civil Service during the Raj. Chapter 7 examines the stories that de Caro incorporated into his repertoire during his time in India as a Fulbright scholar, and chapter 10 is devoted exclusively to the stories of those Indian Civil Service members discussed in chapter 1.

The stories of India and Mexico, as de Caro points out, often have dual interpretations, in that they are often about "the Other," about experiences in locales and with people and events radically different from one's own. In essence, these stories are about culture shock. At the same time, however, there is familiarity because one has lived in a place and become friends with "the Other."

When de Caro and his wife retired, they moved from Baton Rouge to New Orleans,

where they were living when Hurricane Katrina struck. The final chapter tells of their relatively fortunate circumstances of having been able to leave town beforehand, of having different friends throughout the United States take them in, and of having very little damage to their house. Consequently, de Caro has only one story of his own "exile," but, being a folklorist, he heard a number of stories that he recognized as being urban legends or parts of larger narratives that expressed the narrators' concerns about city government, police, crime, and what really happened with the levees.

All of the chapters have endnotes that provide bibliographic sources both for quotations and for additional references. There are also supplemental stories, and there is further information about some informants, terms, and historical and societal events and incidents.

Almost all of the chapters conclude with a recapping of many of the stories told in that chapter and discussion that places them in a context larger than their impact on de Caro's life. This context may include connections to the cycle of stories about American pioneers in the Old West or immigrant experiences, wealth gained or lost, characters met in one's neighborhood or during foreign travel, or cross-cultural adventures and experiences. Other cycles enrich the context by recalling a time or place that exists only in the memories of a few. Furthermore, these summaries provide insightful commentary on the nature of storytelling and the meaning and significance of stories, especially as folklorists have understood them.

Scattered throughout the book are photos of family members, of the lake house where several generations of the family vacationed, and of the home of de Caro and his wife in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, of famed folklorist Richard M. Dorson, and two of de Caro—one during his time at Indiana University and another on one of his many trips to Mexico. There are also historical prints to complement stories about India and Mexico.

I have only minor critiques of this fascinating book. First, because this is a memoir, there are references to and stories by and about a number of family members on both sides and representing several generations; consequently, it would have been helpful to have included a family tree.

Second, during de Caro's time in India as a Fulbright scholar, he traveled all around the country, and though he made fewer references to locations in Mexico, he and his wife also traveled around that country. When reading, I was constantly referring to an atlas (especially for India) to get a better sense of location and of place; it would have helped to have included maps of both countries, including specific locations referenced. Third, though stories inform this memoir, there were several stories whose narrator/informant was not identified; furthermore, there was not much commentary about the contexts in which some of the stories were told. Although de Caro states numerous times that many of the stories that he has heard throughout his life have become *his* stories, he rarely discusses the circumstances under which he would tell them or to whom.

Folklorists tend to be very good at eliciting and telling the stories of others and of others' lives. Rarely do we tell the stories of our own lives. The closest that we come to hearing about each other might be through the rare biography, a *Festschrift*, or compilations of the folklorist's own family's folklore. This book, then, gives us the rare opportunity to learn more about the life of one of our own. Additionally, we are given the opportunity to learn both how various cycles of stories have influenced a life and how a folklore scholar understands and interprets one of the key genres of our discipline.

**Tradition in the Twenty-First Century: Locating the Role of the Past in the Present.** Ed. Trevor J. Blank and Robert Glenn Howard. (Boulder, CO: Utah State University Press; an imprint of the University of Colorado Press, 2013. Pp. xii + 256, acknowledgments, introduction, index.)

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The editors of *Tradition in the Twenty-First Century* are to be heartily congratulated for assembling a lively set of readings that raise important issues, ask useful questions, and offer lines of thought with the capacity to focus, refine, and

extend the folkloristic encounter with perhaps its core intellectual construct, the elusive yet necessary concept of tradition. Trevor J. Blank and Robert Glenn Howard are forthright in their introduction about wanting to stimulate discussion rather than provide facile answers, and the essays gathered here can hardly be said to advance a coherent program for dealing with tradition in the present century. Indeed, they do not even advance a consensual definition of the term. What they do accomplish, and this is perhaps a fitting accolade, is to convey a conviction that tradition remains a fruitful topic of contemplation, and, moreover, that folklorists have a vested interest in pursuing this field of contemplation and indeed have something special to say about it.

This book features contributions from eight folklorists as well as an introduction by the editors; all except the entry from Elliott Oring, "Thinking through Tradition," appear to be freshly composed for this volume. If these essays do not espouse a clear program or definition of the key term, they do formulate a broad agenda for orienting our thinking about tradition in the new century. To a greater or lesser degree, each of these contributions engages with the following queries:

1. To what extent are we inhabitants of a brave new world, where the spread of enhanced communicative technologies has profoundly reconditioned the human experience?
2. What is the fate of tradition, and folklore, in this brave new world?
3. What ethical obligations accrue to scholars in this setting?

There is unhesitating agreement among these authors that we have entered a brave new world shaped by the speed and reach of digitized, online communication. Robert Glenn Howard, in his "Vernacular Authority: Critically Engaging 'Tradition,'" sees, in this new reality, the rise of vernacular authority with its potential to liberate, but also, to insulate, online communities. Tok Thompson, in his "Trajectories of Tradition: Following Tradition into a New Epoch of Human Culture," views the effects of the digital