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

revolution to be "more profound than even those of the printing press" (p. 151), and, in a prophetic vein, he heralds the advent of "post-national identities" (p. 169) and even "the new humanity" (p. 168). Merrill Kaplan, in her "Curation and Tradition on Web 2.0," finds several interesting parallels in the work of pre-digital-age folklorists to the open, participatory flavor of the Internet, but also concludes that "the high-speed online environment" (p. 124) is something new and different.

Armed with this conviction that we are now in a world qualitatively different from the one people have previously inhabited, the authors undertake an inspection of the role of tradition, and by extension, folklore, in this world. All affirm, against a line of thought emanating from such worthies as Friedrich Nietzsche and Anthony Giddens, that tradition will not perish in modernity and postmodernity but, rather, will persist while becoming reconfigured, and maintain the same vital functions it has always performed. Lynne McNeill, in her "And the Greatest of These Is Tradition: The Folklorist's Toolbox in the Twenty-First Century," expects that we will find the new stuff of tradition to be "both familiar and unfamiliar" (p. 179), and Simon Bronner, in his "The 'Handiness' of Tradition," makes a strong case for tradition, which he conceives as a process of cultural reproduction, as a force that will remain "necessary to human interaction" (pp. 208–9) as long as humans remain human. Indeed, if vernacular authority is in fact on the rise, as Howard, Casey Schmitt, and others in this anthology aver, then we may find that the digital world can tip the balance of power away from institutional authority and toward the authority of the participant crowd, with a concomitant empowering of traditions formed through online linkages.

What is to become of folklore in this new dispensation? The authors in this anthology endorse the position taken some years ago by Linda Dégh, that mass media, far from quelling the vitality of folklore, actually enhances its spread and offers it wider horizons than are possible in strictly face-to-face venues. In fact, many of the authors go well beyond this assertion. They envision folklore as an expansive realm that, in some passages, appears to encompass all that transpires on the Web, setting aside the promotions and propaganda placed there by official and commercial agents. Kaplan usefully distinguishes between performance and the archiving of performance on the Web, but notes that both are present in abundance. In the view of these authors, folklore permeates online communication just as online communication permeates what the editors refer to as offline "folk culture" (p. 10). There is a unifying thread to the effect that the items and the processes we associate with folklore are on the rise at this juncture, and folklorists will do well to seize the moment.

Some, but not all, of the contributors advocate for a morally informed and guided folkloristics as we seek our footing in this brave new world. Stephen Olbrys Gencarella, in his "Critical Folklore Studies and the Revaluation of Tradition," urges intervention by folklorists in pursuit of social justice. Developing a portfolio for what he calls a "critical folklore studies," Olbrys Gencarella holds that folklorists cannot stay on the sidelines when confronted with traditions that close off opportunities and perpetuate attitudes of intolerance. This line of argumentation would not gain much ground in Oring's quest for "'a science of tradition'" (p. 23; note that he places these words within quotation marks), but it does find an echo in Howard's admonition that "the critic must communicate her or his judgments" (p. 80). Olbrys Gencarella does not hesitate to locate his critical imperative in today's political setting, though the examples provided by Howard and by Schmitt bring out the layers of nuance that complicate this judgmental faculty. Both Howard and Schmitt delve into contemporary disputes that are full of complications and admit of no easy solutions. Schmitt's skillfully drawn portrait of the demise and afterlife of Chief Illiniwek, the University of Illinois sports mascot, leaves us hanging in the balance between the competing demands of an ancient Native American cultural ethos and a more recent emblem of blazing school spirit.

In moving toward closure, allow me to highlight a few insights contained in this book that possess, in my view, significant promise for fur-

ther development. I have already referred to Howard's discussion of vernacular authority, posed in a binary relationship to "empirical verifiability," the actual foundation in fact for claims to temporal continuity. Howard notes that "a discursive approach to communication events" (p. 75) places emphasis on the rhetorical force of invoking tradition in specific social contexts, a move that shifts the analysis away from the empirical sourcing that was paramount to the authors in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger's seminal collection, *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, 1983). Howard is convinced that online communication, with its participatory openness, "increases vernacular authority because individuals can choose to consume ideas based on their already accepted values" (p. 82).

As I have already noted, Howard does not see the rise of vernacular authority as an unmitigated good. For gay Catholics, online sites and conversations are empowering, offering a vernacular alternative to the dictates of the institutional church. But for advocates for natural family living, favored Web locations seem to isolate them in an echo chamber where strident voices leave no space for a more measured consideration of alternatives. The need for nuanced observation emerges in Howard's treatment of a pagan claim to continuity of practice since the last advance of the glaciers some 35,000 years ago. If the factual basis of this claim is in doubt, it nonetheless possesses a metaphorical integrity that is meaningful within the pagan community. Howard concludes by advising us that "interrogating such complexities is essential in an age of global communication" (p. 95), and his contribution to this collection of essays lays out a model for judiciously conducting such interrogations.

Next, I'd highlight Kaplan's discussion of curation on the Web, which she defines as "preservation, cataloging, interpretation, and exhibition of artifacts to an audience" (p. 127). She looks closely at several online resources: the Snopes project on urban legends; the cataloguing of folk speech on Urban Dictionary; the Online Slang Dictionary; and Know Your Memes, which tracks the movement of online creations that have "gone viral." These sites and many others like them engage in curating the contents of Web communication, and share the concerns and, to some extent, the methods of folklorists doing comparative research, even if most of these curators are not trained in our field—indeed, some of the organizers and coordinators might be thought of as "folk folklorists" (my term, not Kaplan's). Kaplan shows that these projects employ a range of curatorial practices, with varying degrees of egalitarianism, although active participation in the gathering and evaluation of resources is standard across the continuum.

Naturally, collaborative projects have been customary in folklore research for some time—recall the invitation extended by William Thoms to readers of the *Athenaeum* to contribute instances of the folk-lore he was describing—but in this brave new world of mediated communication, the velocity and extension of a project can attain levels undreamed of in the past. And an additional twist that Kaplan brings to our attention is the capacity of computer technology to monitor its own contents, to produce, for example, counts of Google searches that map the rise and fall of interest in a particular online meme.

Finally, I must add a few words on Bronner's entertaining and informative riff on the handiness of tradition. Tracking the many colloquial expressions centered on the human hand, Bronner makes a compelling case for the intimacy of tradition as "a sign of humanity" (p. 199), and, hence, a necessary ritualized framework for orienting human thought and behavior, even in the present moment with its "folklorization of the self" (p. 206). Bronner challenges the "image of modernity as the new order sweeping out the old traditions," arguing instead for "a layered picture of cultural dynamics" (p. 210). In this more layered scene, the human attachment to cultivating tradition continues unabated.

Bronner floats another strategy for getting at the rich essence of tradition, introducing the *pheme* as "a performative utterance with a definite sense of meaning" (p. 203). This term originates, Bronner tells us, in Pheme of Greek mythology, who was associated with rumor and whose "skill was in framing material in such a

way that it would be passed around" (p. 203). Phemic communication, in Bronner's construction, foregrounds "precedent, continuity, and convention" (p. 205), qualities, we all might agree, that lend the invocation of tradition its remarkable power.

Therapeutic Uses of Storytelling: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Narration as Therapy. Ed. Camilla Asplund Ingemark. (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2013. Pp. 208, foreword, notes, references, photographs, acknowledgments, author biographies.)

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Most folklorists are aware that storytelling and story-gathering are therapeutic activities for both themselves and the teller. Ingemark's compilation of papers from the symposium "The Therapeutic Use of Storytelling," held at Åbo Akademi University in Finland, December 13–14, 2012, with authored papers from Finland, Germany, Sweden, Estonia, and the United States, not only reinforces this knowledge but also gives the reader a perspective of various elements and types of stories, presented by folks from many areas of academia, including psychology, social work, history, writing, and folkloristics. Ingemark acknowledges existing research and then pushes the envelope as she introduces the reader to some pretty interesting new research.

A rich introduction into therapeutic uses of storytelling, by Ingemark, discusses the power of the flowing, dynamic form of storytelling, particularly emphasizing that telling one's story and putting it into a narrative form help make that personal story manageable, particularly when it comes to finding a resolution or closure to the story. Ingemark emphasizes the ways in which narratives are therapeutic. She suggests that narratives, and the problems often shared in one's story, are based on ideologies and culturally sanctioned ways of sharing stories and experiences. These ways of sharing can be restrictive, forcing the teller and listener into roles that restrict a person's autonomy, perhaps placing him or her in an uncomfortable position—think of William Bascom's four functions of folklore—meant for reinforcing stereotypes and values; or they can be constructive, giving the teller and listener opportunities to learn about their ways, and putting words to life's elements that otherwise can go unnoted. Narratives can educate and entertain, allowing one to see his or her story from a different perspective and see new approaches to relationships, which is often the goal of therapy, including the possibility of being able to reinvent oneself or re-author one's story, and, hence, one's life and relationships.

Still in this section, Ingemark shares how some stories are best left untold, or better yet, why therapists should not open what they can't close. Narratives cannot, by themselves, heal, but they are a tool to reconciliation. Storytelling is also a way to reflect—making sense of one's world, sharing one's past as a way of leaving a legacy, and purely as a way of self-reflection—creating a distance between the event and the individual. Lastly, Ingemark discusses the role of community in storytelling.

Going forward, the book is divided into three sections, with "Identity and Therapeutic Narrative," being the first section. Here, we read about "Narrative Identity and Psychotherapy," by Donald Polkinghorne, learning that "[n]arrative is a mode of thought that links together a set of life happenings or choices as they hinder or contribute to an outcome" (p. 21). Geir Lundby's "From Single to Double Stories of Identity" talks about the absent, but implied stories—life experiences that are not put into a narrative: daily, perhaps mundane events that are not "unique" or "special," and how to take the trivial and add it to the already existing story. "You Should Say Such Things That Mobile Phones Will Fall," by Moon Meier, explores performance between the teller and listener, with the teller being not only the performer but the "tradition carrier" (p. 68) with the responsibility of teaching others how to share their stories.

The second section, titled "Coping with the Past and the Present," shares historical writings and contemporary tales and discusses the value they are to the teller, to the clinician, and to the