Unruly Audience: Folk Interventions in Popular Media. Greg Kelley. (Logan: Utah State University Press, 2020. Pp. ix + 242, acknowledgments, introduction, notes, references, index. $24.95 paper.)

Since its founding, the folklore discipline has, at times, revealed shades of a luddite bent. The loathed technological bogeyman targeted is ever evolving, morphing from print to radio to television to the Internet. In *Unruly Audience*, Greg Kelley dismisses such notions as antiquated and spurious, choosing instead to embrace the potential of popular media to stimulate folk culture and to see participatory folk interventions in mainstream media as the folklorist's next calling.

While the corporate purveyors of popular media would love totalitarian control over their content, try as they may, they cannot constrain the meanings of their texts once released. This leaves the folk free to use these materials to mock corporate power, to resist institutional authority, and to critique the commercial world. From Kelley's perspective, corporate producers are but one of many voices, all equally legitimate. That is, audiences are not passive receivers, but active consumers—and, to an extent, co-producers of today's media. The relationship is not a one-way street, but rather a two-way avenue, or perhaps a chaotic all-directions traffic circle, where folk drivers can add, remix, or resist the dominant popular media through their own creative interventions.

A significant implication here is the continued breakdown of any clear delineation between the realms of "folk" and "popular," where fluidity and interplay are commonplace. Rather than displacing folklore, Kelley argues, popular media exists in a feedback loop with folk materials, each with the potential to enrich the other. To test this thesis, Kelley embarks on six case studies to demonstrate how participatory folk interventions in popular media work in practice.

The first case study is the tune of "Colonel Bogey," the catchy military march. The song's melodic motifs invited

generations of humorous lyrical parody, first of the Nazis and later of popular commercial products like Comet. The vulgar, irreverent lyrics clash with (and therefore mock) the stately imperial march, and the audiences' folk interventions, in this case, recast the melody's respectability and rewrite its cultural significance. The second case study compares "Snow White" jokes to Disney's family-friendly *Snow White*, demonstrating how folk intervention, in this instance in the form of profane humor, resists wholesome Disneyfication. The third case study visits Rose Hall, a historic tourist destination in Jamaica that has become symbolic of Jamaica's troubled past due to its haunting by the ghost of Annie Palmer, "the White Witch of Rose Hall." The legend flourishes, despite being both apocryphal and easily debunked, because it stands in for the national narrative of slavery and emancipation. The legend and Rose Hall's performative dimensions allow for folk intervention in the form of co-production of the entire touristic experience.

The fourth case study confronts "That's what she said" jokes, that puerile and improvisatory joke cycle known the world over. What began as folk wordplay akin to Wellerisms was reinvigorated by popular media, specifically *The Office*, and then launched back into the folk realm where it took on a second life. The fifth case study turns to children's culture, specifically in the form of parodies of commercial jingles, where the folk (in this case children) undermine, mock, and ridicule the corporate advertising in creative, subversive ways. And the final case study grapples with metahumor, that is, joking about timeworn jokes, the folk intervention interrupting and commenting on the very act of joking.

In each case study, Kelley provides a thorough overview and detailed historical background. The book features delightful prose, and Kelley is never stingy with fun and pertinent examples, always anticipating the one I was thinking of. If I could institute one structural change to the book, it would be to rearrange the contents of the conclusion, bringing the important

and insightful work found there into earlier chapters. As I progressed through the book, I had thought two vital elements were missing. The introduction lacked a literature review that placed this work in its intellectual lineage, and in the case-study chapters, there were no strong conclusions offered that explained the larger significance of the material at hand or its relevance to the development of a grander theory of folk intervention. As I reached the conclusion, I was surprised to find Kelley had, in fact, done all of this intellectual labor, chapter by chapter, but chose to tuck those findings away in the conclusion. The results, once found, were still appreciated, but their effect was lessened by the time I read them, when the case studies were no longer fresh in my mind.

In *Unruly Audience*, Kelley demonstrates beyond a doubt that audiences are no longer passive consumers (if they ever were) but rather dynamic producers in their own right, interventionists with equal creative rights to the expressive forms they encounter—free to personalize media and make it relevant to their needs and circumstances. The book proves a welcome addition to the folklorist's bookshelf on folk-popular dynamics, settling comfortably next to the volumes on poplore, folklorism, and folkloresque, while avoiding another neologism. Kelley leaves room for future ethnographic inquiry into the dynamics of folk intervention in media, and future generations of media-inclined folklorists will be inspired to pursue their own folk-interventionist case studies and to continue to theorize the folk-popular dynamic.

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