

## PREFACE

The papers in this issue originated in Prof. John H. McDowell's seminar on conversational folklore at Indiana University during the spring semester 1983. The students each wrote five brief fieldwork exercises instead of the usual research paper. We felt that others would be interested in this uncooked data and offer it as a stimulant to folklorists' voracious appetite for new courses. A brief taste was offered at the 1983 AFS meetings in Nashville, and the present issue contains the soup.

The papers are of an exploratory nature. They cover a wide range of genres and culture areas. James Stewart presents vignettes of greeting behavior in elevators. The greetings are modified by the nature of the environment and the character of the population. Enoch Timpunza-Mvula links nicknaming with proverbs in Chewa society. Cheryl Keyes shows how rap music incorporates features of black speech (her paper was not written for the seminar). Takayuki Wakatake discusses a form of Japanese word play which combines phonetic, orthographic and semantic puns with Chinese characters. Thomas Walker visited a boys' club to record a riddling session, and suggests that the entire event constituted a riddle. Closely related to riddles are puzzles. Will Wheeler muses about this hitherto neglected genre.

The remaining papers are all on conversational narratives. Bruce Harrah-Conforth combines an innovative transcription method with a discussion of pitch, speed and volume in performed and reported versions of the same narrative. Moira Smith demonstrates how the opening words of a personal experience narrative serve a double function: they secure the permission of the participants in the conversation to tell a story and enhance the artistry of the narrative itself. Regina Bendix, drawing from a joke teller's own rhetorical insights, sketches his personality, style, and social use of jokes. Finally, Kwesi Yankah shows how a Ghanaian narrator uses onomatopoeia and gestures to lend verisimilitude to his story.

John H. McDowell's introduction outlines the scope of research into conversational genres of folklore. The bibliographies were consolidated and placed at the end. For reasons of space, only a few additional titles were incorporated.

Bloomington  
January , 1985

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