

From the Editors

This issue of *Folklore Forum* marks a departure from a routine established with the last few issues, which were dedicated to special topics ("Folklore and Women's Status," "Ethnohistory and Cultural Representations," and "Folk Religions of the African Diaspora"). Volume 24, Number 1 includes a particularly interesting variety of topics and approaches. Jean R. Freedman's article demonstrates how one sub-group of Child ballads, illegitimate pregnancy ballads, give expression to social conflict and a wide range of varying attitudes, countering the common argument that ballads represent only "normative community values." Freedman's assertions are bolstered with close textual analysis of three Child ballads—"Tam Lin," "The Cruel Mother," and "Lady Maisry." J.O.J. Nwachukwu-Agbada offers a detailed description of Igbo folktale characteristics, showing the narratives as a "literary art form," and he focuses as well on the performative elements common to Igbo tale-telling events. Linda Kinsey Adams explores the use of narrative song as a strategic rhetorical device promoting epiphanous experiences within religious services at the Agape church in Ellettsville, Indiana. Adams outlines the format of the services and examines how narrative songs function in that context—uniting "the world of experience and the world of presentation." In the final article Lael Weissman takes her lead from William Wilson's seminal work "Herder, Folklore and Romantic Nationalism" (*Journal of Popular Culture* 6[1973]:819-835), but argues that Romantic Nationalism was only part of the more sweeping movement of modern humanism. It is in this larger historical frame that Weissman places the work of Herder.

This issue's *Open Forum* centers on folklore pedagogy. Christine Condaris contemplates teaching resources available in the local community, and Shannon Docherty examines the benefits of using films and videos in the classroom. *Open Forum* editor John Laudun introduces these two contributions with a prefatory comment (66).

Folklore Forum is planning a special issue on nationalism. Individuals interested in submitting articles for that issue are invited to send letters of inquiry to the editors.

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