

The Graduate Program in Folk Studies at Western Kentucky University

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The Graduate Program in Folk Studies at Western Kentucky University is recognized internationally for its unique curriculum in the study of folklore and folklife. Early on, the program was designed to provide a usable master's degree that made its graduates marketable in the burgeoning field of folklore; it was not intended merely to be a stepping stone for the Ph.D. The program merges traditional folklore studies with a pragmatic orientation to the job market. While covering major genres and theoretical perspectives of folklore and folklife, the student is also exposed to such courses as Applied Folklore, Museum Techniques and Procedures, and Folklife and Preservation.

There is a long history of the study of folklore here at Western Kentucky, beginning in 1928, when Gordon Wilson taught the first folklore class. D.K. Wilgus taught at Western in the 1950's and early '60's. Robert Teske, Jay Anderson, Marilyn White, and Kenneth and Mary Clarke are among the others who have been on the faculty. Currently, the Folk Studies core faculty consists of Camilla Collins, Burt Feintuch, Lynwood Montell, and Michael Ann Williams. Along with these four, the program is complemented by faculty members from a number of other departments.

The Folk Studies Program also offers a specialized degree track, unique in North America, that combines folklore and historic preservation. Since 1978, students in the folklife and historic preservation track have focused on the preservation of the architectural landscape and on cultural conservation. Recognized by the Na-

tional Council for Preservation Education, the historic preservation track exposes students to the study of material culture, museology, vernacular architecture, and to relevant historical investigation.

Two other degree tracks in Western's Folk Studies Program are the thesis and the non-thesis options. All students consult with their advisor to determine the most appropriate track given their interests and plans. Regardless of the degree track chosen, students must pass a written, four-hour comprehensive examination, as well as fulfill a research tool requirement, either by demonstrating competency in a foreign language or by taking an additional course designated as a research tool. Folk Studies graduate students are required to take core courses in folklore genres, folklore theory, and folklore fieldwork and oral history. Historic preservation students must also satisfy additional course requirements in other departments. Most thesis and non-thesis students finish the program in three semesters; preservation students finish it in four.

Since the program's formal inception in 1970, Western's students have had multi-faceted educational opportunities. The program was the first in the country to develop an internship network that provided students with academic credit and work experience. A wide range of institutions and agencies have sponsored interns, ranging from the Smithsonian, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Tennessee Valley Authority, and the National Park Service to numerous state and local museums and preservation agencies.

Additionally, a strong folklore, folklife, and oral history archive is an important part of the Western program. Considered a "working archive," it is based with museum and manuscript collections, and is the only folklore archive in the country based in the university library system and administered by library staff. In addi-

tion, the program enjoys a strong working relationship with the Kentucky Museum and Library, which often provides important research and practicum facilities.

For many years the faculty has edited for the regional journal, *The Kentucky Folklore Record*. Recently, Western Kentucky University acquired the once prominent *Southern Folklore Quarterly*. Both journals will be merged into a new journal to be called *Southern Folklore*. The first issue will come out in the fall of 1988 under the editorship of Camilla Collins.

For five years now, the program has had an endowed annual lecture series known as the Rudy-McNulty Folklife Lecture, which brings nationally significant folklorists to Bowling Green for lectures and forums. Also important are the several colloquia held throughout the academic year when other important folklorists and preservationists are brought to campus, often for extended visits. Currently, plans are underway to develop a student exchange network and working relationship in conjunction with the Centre for English Cultural Tradition and Language at the University of Sheffield.

Today, the Department of Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies is a hybrid department which merged Modern Languages and the Department of Intercultural Studies as a consequence of university-wide reorganization in the late 1970's. The Graduate Program in Folk Studies is essentially a free-standing academic program within this hybrid department. The program administers its own curriculum and graduate assistantships; the latter carry stipends up to \$4,000 and a waiver of out-of-state tuition.

Past experience has demonstrated that students who do well and want a job upon degree completion have little difficulty finding a position. Western graduates have been employed as state folklorists, state oral historians, museum professionals, and in Main Street Preservation

Programs, state arts programs, and regional centers for folklore and folklife. Additionally, a number have chosen to continue graduate studies at the doctoral level, not only in folklore/folklife, but also in such fields as American studies, anthropology, sociology, and urban studies.

Theses completed at Western Kentucky include:

- Allen, Ray
1981 Old-Time Music and the Urban Folk Revival.
- Alm, Jan
1981 A Sourcebook for the Interpretation of Traditional Dance by Outdoor Museums and Historic Sites.
- Archbold, Annelen
1975 The Beeson Farmstead: A Study of the Functional Aspects of a Black Farm in the Richland Community.
- Axler, David
1977 Fandom is a Way of Life: A Folkloristic Ethnography of Science Fiction Fandom.
- Beatty, Roger
1975 Chester Cornett: A Study of the Effects of Culture Change on a Traditional Kentucky Craftsman.
- Beisswenger, Donald Andrew
1985 Singing Schools in South Central Kentucky.
- Boaz, Peggy
1976 The Oral Folk History Surrounding the Life of William Bernard "Big Six" Henderson.
- Bulger, Margaret Anne
1976 The Carter Family: Traditional Sources for Song.
- Cochrane, Timothy
1982 The Folklife Expressions of Three Isle Royale Fishermen: A Sense of Place Examination.
- Downs, Stuart
1978 Poetic Expression and the Folk Experience: Analysis and Anthology.
- Farris, Nana
1982 Ink In My Blood: The Folklore of a Commercial Print Shop.
- Gibson, Debbie
1981 Folklore, Folklife and Still Photography: A Synergetic Approach.
- Grenier, Kate Parker
1978 Folklore, Poetry, and Identity: A Study of the Archetypes in the Poetry of Leslie Silko.
- Hall, Deborah
1983 Using Folklore to Teach English as a Second Language.
- Hansen, Gregory
1987 "The Blankety-Blank" of Bear Creek Camp: A Rhetorical Analysis of a Folk Drama.

- Harzoff, Elizabeth
1981 "They Had the Biggest Time You Ever Saw": Square Dances as Settings for Community Social Interaction in Trigg County, Kentucky, Ca. 1920-1979.
- Hauri-Foster, Julie
1984 Two Hairdressers: Artistry and Communication.
- Howard, Gilbert
1981 Fiddle Songs and Banjo Songs: A Description and Index.
- Jureka, Theresa
1983 Women and Work at the Turn of the Century: The Mrs. A. H. Taylor Dressmaking Company.
- Kaplan, Lori
1979 The Lark on the Strand: A Study of a Traditional Irish Flute Player and His Music.
- Kiely, Dennis
1983 The Loving of the Game: A Study of Basketry in the Mammoth Cave Area.
- Kohn, Ira
1976 The Use of Architectural Drawing in the Documentation of Log Folk Housing.
- Korn, Michael
1979 ...An' the Whole Nine Yards: An Ethnography of a Kentucky Gunsmith.
- Krontz, Marian
1978 A Folkloristic Look at Cockfighting.
- Landes, John
1978 Social and Psychological Aspects of the Style and Repertoire of a Folk Musician.
- Laude, Jan
1982 A Contemporary Female Psychic: A Folkloristic Study of a Traditional Occupation.
- Ludden, Keith
1982 "No Bob Yet": A Collection of Narratives from Nobob, Kentucky.
- Lyne, David
1976 What Are They Saying? A Study of the Jargon of Hilltopping.
- Marshall, John
1981 Barbecue in Western Kentucky: An Ethnographic Study.
- Martin, Charles
1974 Parallelisms in Attitude of Vietnam Veterans and Veterans of the Indian Wars as Reflected in Memoirs and Oral Traditions.
- Martin, Katherine
1974 A Comparative Study of German and Kentucky Moon Beliefs.
- Mason, Ervin
1982 A Study of the Biblical Narrative of Saul, Including Investigation of the Folktale and Proverb as Genres of Folk Narrative.
- McCurley, Edward
1982 A History of the Bowling Green Fire Department: A Look at Two Traditional Methodologies.
- Middleswarth, Victoria Lynn
1977 A Folkloristic Approach to Storytelling Performance by a Contemporary Librarian.

- Morse, Michael
1975 *The Hensley Settlement: An Oral Folk History of Material Culture.*
- Morse, Rebecca
1979 *Tinsley Bottom, Tennessee: An Historical Reconstruction Utilizing Oral Narrative Traditions.*
- Ostrofsky
1982 *O. Henry's Use of Stereotypes in His New York City Stories: An Example of the Utilization of Folklore in Literature.*
- Parker, Carol
1975 *A Study in Oral History -- Cedar Grove Community.*
- Poyser, Stephen
1978 *Latent Didactic Functions of Tlingit Mythology: A Re-evaluation of Raven's Role in Northwest Coast Culture.*
- Riley, Sheila
1986 *Mam-Ma: A Oral Life History of Mona Baldwin.*
- Reynolds, George
1980 *Home, Loved Ones and Heaven: Folk Expression in the Songs of Katherine O'Neill Peters Sturgill.*
- Rufty, Ruby
1976 *The Paper Repertoire of the Students in One Elementary School.*
- Sadewasser, Judith
1976 *The Reliability of Selected Weather Beliefs.*
- Schofield, Albert
1977 *Oystering in Kent Narrows, Maryland.*
- Steed, Daniel, Jr.
1977 *A Folkloric Perspective on Traditional Auctioneering.*
- Stoner, Michael
1976 *"If I'd Been Polish, I'd Be Playing Polkas": An Examination of the Social Contexts of Traditional Irish Music in Rochester, New York.*
- Sutherland, David
1973 *The Little People of Pea Ridge.*
- Taft, Ann
1986 *At the Spiritual Grass Roots: An Analysis of Visionary Art and Artists.*
- Taylor, David
1978 *They Like to Sing the Old Songs: The A.C. Phipps Family and its Music.*
- Taylor, Robert
1973 *Drowned at Turnhole: A Study of Western Kentucky Epitaphs.*
- Umberger, Eugene, Jr.
1975 *Tobacco Farming: The Persistence of Tradition.*
- Vincent, Benjamin
1977 *The Price of Folk: The Progression of Two Decoy Makers' Work from Folk to Non-Folk.*
- Waggoner, Gayle Anne
1977 *"They Made Us Dance in the Pig Trough!": Mrs. Blanche Story's Oral Accounts of Dating, Courtship, Marriage, and Sexual Attitudes in Northcentral Nebraska, 1885-1910.*
- Webb, J. Vaughan
1977 *Traditional Elements in the Selected Columns of Allan M. Trout.*

Weldy, Mary Helen

1980 A Study of the Usefulness of Folkloric Topics in a
Remotivation Technique Program with Institutional Elderly
Persons.

Whie, Linda C.

1976 "I Love Ta Plow": The Role of Traditional Farm Women in
Peytonsburg, Kentucky.

Willett, E. Henry, III

1975 A Case Study of the Tradition of the Chanted Sermon in
Virginia.

Those interested in further information about the Graduate Folk Studies Program at Western Kentucky University should write Burt Feintuch, Coordinator, Programs in Folk Studies, Department of Modern Languages and Intercultural Studies, Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY 42101.