In memoriam: Edson Richmond, 1916–1994

Several years ago, some time in 1989, I think, we had a party at the Folklore Institute — a book-signing party for Edson Richmond on the publication of his Ballad Scholarship: An Annotated Bibliography. I was asked to say a few words of introduction and took that opportunity to talk not only about Edson’s scholarship and contributions to the Institute, but also to talk about Edson as a colleague and friend. I spoke about moments we had shared, social gatherings, even food we had eaten. And then colleagues began to add their individual recollections. It was a warm and collaborative celebration of a man who quietly and significantly participated in the life of the Folklore Institute, Indiana University, and the profession beyond.

My experience at the 1994 AFS meetings, after I read a prepared memorial statement, sparked similar discussions, colleagues and friends recalling their own experiences. Tom Walker told me that Edson had taught him how to sail; Phil Nusbaum recalled a particular class; many remarked on his humanity, his generosity, his friendship.

I probably first met Edson Richmond when I took his class on the medieval romance, but I really got to know him through our parallel interests in the ballad, that most literary of genres. Edson came to his interest in the ballad as a graduate student at Ohio State, where he studied with Francis Lee Utley. There, he also developed an interest in onomastic studies and language and nurtured his love of medieval literature. He came to Indiana as a faculty member in the English department in 1945. A Fulbright to Norway in 1953 stimulated his interest in Scandinavian materials, especially balladry. Numerous students in his course on the English and Scottish Popular Ballads were subsequently introduced to the Scandinavian parallels. Numerous articles attest as well to that interest, culminating in his role as consulting editor for The Types of the Scandinavian Medieval Ballad. He continued to make trips to Scandinavia; he was again a Fulbright Scholar and visited Norway the winter of the 1994 Olympics. He visited his fellow folklorist and skiing enthusiast Olav Bo, whose book Skiing Throughout History he had translated in time for the Olympics. Edson’s expertise in things Scandinavian was recognized and honored in 1977, when he was elected to the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters.

His teaching touched on Scandinavia, things medieval and linguistic/philological, and, of course, the ballad. He served on countless dissertation committees. Throughout his career, he edited a number of journals, serving on the editorial boards of others. At Indiana University, he had a long tenure as member and chair of the Fulbright-Hays selection committee. He was an officer of the American Folklife Society and was elected to the Society of Fellows.

Yet he had “outside” interests: He shared with his wife, (continued on page 2)
New sound lab opens doors

On Friday, Sept. 15, the Sound and Video Analysis Instructional Laboratory (SAVAIL) of the Folklore Institute opened its doors to visitors from folklore, the music school, anthropology, and linguistics. Coming to its new location in the institute, visitors watched demonstrations of new equipment and software, including upgraded versions of Soundscope and Media 100, as well as filtering and energy-based sound analysis software operating on a newly acquired NeXt computer. In addition to demonstrations of software, the open house featured presentations of completed and in-progress projects, including a harmonic analysis of Tibetan chant by Brad Shope (folklore/ethnomusicology), an analysis of vocal ornamentation of Northern Plains Native Americans by Eric Gooding (anthropology), a video on the authority of the television journalist, using the Tanya Harding story as an example, by Susan Yarbro (journalism), and another video by Professor Ronald Smith, PhD’76, focusing on an analysis of movement and sound in religious festivals in Spain and Malawi.

The coordinator of SAVAIL this year is Nina Fales, PhD’92. Following her defense, she left for Paris on a National Science Foundation Fellowship to do postdoctoral research at the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM). In her two and a half years at IRCAM, she did analysis and experimental work on the perception of noise and tone and the use of noisy elements in traditional music. This research was a direct continuation of her dissertation work on whispered inanga of Burundi. The results of her noise and tone studies were subsequently used by composers at IRCAM in their own compositions. Some of the new software in the lab comes directly from IRCAM, where it was developed specifically for analysis of music, as opposed to commercial sound analysis software, which is generally oriented towards speech.

This year, SAVAIL will host workshops on sound and video analysis and perception, as well as a series of noon-time talks on related topics by people inside and beyond the department. The first issue of SAVAIL working papers on projects in progress is also planned for the second semester.

Edson Richmond

(continued from page 1)

Elizabeth (Betty), and with his two sons an interest in sailing and snow skiing. He was active in the Bloomington Yacht Club, teaching the fundamentals of sailing to generations of aspiring skippers. At home, he built scale models, read contemporary novels, and assembled a remarkable scholarly library.

Edson looked the part of the academic; he smoked a pipe, wore tweed jackets. Despite his unfailing courtesy, he made it clear to me in a way I never forgot that he disliked tomatoes, wouldn’t eat them no matter how I might disguise them. And in July, he and Betty confessed that they sometimes ate peanut butter for breakfast; I am saddened that I will not be able to remind him of that culinary oddity. He danced at my daughter’s wedding — where no tomatoes were served — offered friendship and quiet support at critical personal and professional moments. He was, as all who knew him will attest, that extremely rare being — an endangered species — both gentleman and scholar.

—Mary Ellen Brown
From the chair

Stone seeks to strengthen links with alumni

I come to the position of department chair with a longstanding affection for the people in the Folklore Institute, first as a graduate student, and now for 16 years as a faculty member. The recent American Folklore Society annual meeting in Louisiana made clear how many fine scholars have been nourished in Bloomington and have carried a part of the Folklore Institute and its culture with them to wherever they now live and work. I propose to strengthen links among faculty, students and alumni for the challenges that face us as we seek to reaffirm and reinvent the Folklore Institute in the culture of Indiana as well as within the global context.

As Indiana University moves into the next four years, I will be proposing events and projects that will bring alumni into the circle of activities ever more strongly.

We are in the process of constructing a home page on the Internet for the institute. This site will be a ready linkage for prospective students and our alumni as well.

We are planning a major event for 1997 to entice alumni back to campus and will be mailing out details as our plans develop.

We will be seeking help from alumni for a major endowment campaign that will be launched this academic year.

As we actively plan these initiatives, I invite you to offer your ideas and thoughts. Please write, call (812)855-0398, or e-mail (stone@indiana.edu).

—Ruth M. Stone

A note from the past chair

McDowell looks back on four years as chair

I find myself in a blessed state, an escaped bureaucrat preparing for an extended leave of absence. I can't decide whether the greater joy is watching Ruth Stone apply her skills to the well-being of our program, or contemplating my imminent return to the field. These delights scarcely allow for a glance back at my term at the helm of the Folklore Institute, but let me attempt a few apt ruminations here.

The past four years were good ones for me, and I hope to some degree for the Folklore Institute as well. Having done most of my time at the margins of things, it was fascinating to be thrust into the center and there to discover how it all really works. Remarkably, my initial sense that we have a special community was confirmed during the course of my four years as chair. As I became more aware of the tensions that devastate so many academic departments, I felt increasingly grateful for the distinctive esprit de corps that holds us together in the quest for folkloristic understanding. To my colleagues, to our students, and to our staff, I express a heartfelt thanks for your dedication to the cause.

Maybe that's the key: it seems that we still have a cause, a mission beyond the mere servicing of requirements, beyond the confines of stale professionalism. Let me conclude this brief retrospect with an appreciation of our alumni, you who have responded to this cause in so many ways in your careers. Will you say with me as you read this: Viva la causa!

—John H. McDowell
Alumni interview

Dundes speaks on Freud, feminism, fieldwork

Upon being assigned to present the work
of Alan Dundes, PhD '62, to a seminar
on American folklore, Barbara Hummel,
MA '94, and Cathy Brigham, MA '94,
contacted Dundes, and he most graciously
agreed to a phone interview, which they
played for the class. Excerpts from the
20-minute conversation follow.

BH: Wolfgang Mieder has lauded you as
one of the world's leading folklorists.

AD: Well, I think people who have
published in any field — articles or
books that have perhaps influenced stu-
dents or other scholars — deserve some
kind of recognition. In my own case,
since I tend to be a Freudian, I’d say
that I’ve had really minimal impact on
the field. As one colleague put it, I am
a leader in the field with no followers.
Which was sort of flattering, but then
again, was sort of an admission of the
truth. To the extent that my own re-
search goes in one direction, it’s not a
direction that has been followed by
many people.

BH: Why have so few people followed in
your footsteps?

AD: So few people have followed be-
cause I think they’re afraid, basically.
People are basically frightened of trying
to find out why they’re interested in
folklore. They’re afraid if they under-
stood the latent content of folklore, then
they wouldn’t be able to study it any-
more. It’s as if people are fearful of analy-
sis of any kind. Don’t analyze anything
because you might destroy it. And I
think that’s a real pity. Most folklorists
do everything possible to avoid confront-
ing psychological reality. That is to say,
they deal with structure, they deal with
motifs, they deal with diffusion — any-
thing but deal with the human content
of the folklore.

CB: Do you think these are alternative
ways of interpreting folklore?

AD: No, I don’t think these people inter-
pret at all. I think they basically talk
about possible historical origins, when
there’s very little data for it, and I think
they chop it up into pieces, because that’s
safe, no emotional risk involved. I don’t
think you interpret necessarily by chop-
ing something up into pieces. I think
that most of folklore, to the extent that it
is fantasy, cannot be interpreted without
psychology.

BH: When you offer your interpretations,
do you think that they are the sole interpre-
tations?

AD: No. Just as there are variants in
texts of folklore, there are also variations
in interpretations of folklore. However,
in general, if you read the pages of the
Journal of American Folklore for the past
100 years, if you read Brunvand’s text or
Dorson’s text, you’d never guess that
anybody could possibly interpret folk-
lore psychologically. There’s almost no
mention of it. Or if there is mention of
it, it’s just to denigrate it.

CB: You say that interpretation has to
be based on psychology. Do you think that
psychological interpretations of folklore
have to be based on Freudian psychology?

AD: Well, I’m willing to consider alter-
natives to Freud. Unfortunately, the
Jungian theory is not much help. It’s
impossible to reconcile Jungian theory
with cultural relativism. And I do be-
lieve in cultural relativism. There are no
universals in folklore. There are no myths,
there are no folktales, there’s no legend
that is found in every culture. So, there-
fore, if cultures have different folklore,
then we have to be cultural relativists.
Freudian theory can at least be recon-
ciled with cultural relativism. So, the
answer to your question is “yes.” I think
the Freudian theory, as modified by
Cardner, offers an alternative that is em-
pirically testable.

CB: One of the biggest groups attacking
Freudian psychology, at least in the past two
decades, is feminists.

AD: And they’re right to attack. Be-
cause Freud, I think, totally misunder-
stood women. There’s a lot of Freud
that is total nonsense. The primal horde
theory is nonsense, the [philogenetic]
origin of ontogenetic material is non-
sense. What’s interesting about Freud
is not all of his failures, but his under-
standing of symbolism, of condensa-
tion, of displacement, of projection,
and all kinds of other fascinating psy-
chological mechanisms that are clear
at work in folklore.

BH: How do you conduct your fieldwork?

AD: I don’t do fieldwork. I’m basing
[my work] on other people’s fieldwork.
You see, that’s the problem with folklor-
ists. They just collect, collect, collect.
They classify, classify, classify. They build
these big archives, and they don’t inter-
pret it. They die. I’m not going to let
that happen to me.

BH: So you then want to spend your time
interpreting, whereas you’re letting the other
people collect it?

AD: Well, I wish they’d interpret, too. I
think the people who really should be
doing the interpreting are the people
who are doing the collecting, because
they’re right there in the scene. They can
actually test, in some cases, the validity
of the interpretation. Although given
the nature of the unconscious, I wouldn’t
expect informants to always agree with
my interpretations. I’m not against field
work. I’m glad people do it. Otherwise
I’d have no data to analyze. But I think
we’ve been gathering data for too many
centuries now without analyzing it. It’s
time to analyze it.

BH: What are you working on now?

AD: I just finished a study of untouch-
ability in India. It’s something like the
German book [Life Is Like a Chicken Coop
Ladder], if anybody will publish it. And
I’m working now on anti-Semitism in
folklore.

BH: Do you see yourself continuing to work
in essentially the same vein?

AD: Oh, yes. I’m in a rut. And it’s a
rut that I very much like. I enjoy analy-
zing different kinds of folklore and
trying to figure things out. The last
few years, I’ve gotten away from struc-
tural analysis. And I’m now free, now
that I have tenure and all of that. I can
do what I want, and I prefer to do
psychological analysis. I don’t have to
mess with these safe things anymore; I
can do really interesting things. If you
want to be psychological, go ahead.
Just make sure you have tenure first.
The folklore collection in the Indiana University Library was quite different 31 years ago, when Polly Grimshaw was first hired by the university. Then, it was situated in the infamous Room 41 and was operated by harried graduate students. Now, the folklore collection is world-renowned for its size and diversity. Polly, a subject librarian for Indiana University, helped bring about many of these changes. Though responsible for four other areas of the library, she sees the folklore collection as a full-time job. Its very hallmark of uniqueness makes her position so time-consuming; to ensure the unique wealth of materials here, Polly is continually scouring the world for sources to acquire.

Polly is well-known within the Folklore Institute. Many students and faculty members have relied on her research skills to help their own work. She has seen students taking their library for granted. Years later, they run into Polly at AFS or AAA meetings and tell her how they miss the folklore collection, “and that’s rewarding,” she says. At this year’s AFS meeting, Polly’s 31 years of service to IU were publicly honored at an alumni reception where she was recognized and presented with a gift.

Polly’s work within the folklore collection has also helped the university library system at large; the folklore collection’s reputation has been responsible for several grants given to the library.

Polly will retire exactly 31 years after the day she started working at Indiana. “It will be a really sad day when I leave,” she says, “but I’m also looking forward to leaving.” Retirement for Polly does not mean a long vacation. She plans to turn some of her own research into a book. Polly took a sabbatical in 1992 to examine 17th-century letters written by New Enganders to their friends and family back home. Focusing specifically on the letters of women settlers, Polly finds it fascinating to see how people confront each other. In her book, Polly plans to examine how individual early settlers thought of the people already living in America.

Aside from giving her time to research and writing, Polly is looking forward to retirement for other reasons as well. “It’s going to be just great to spend four consecutive days at home. I haven’t done that in years.”

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Sue Tuohy joins institute

Sue Tuohy, PhD’88, is the Folklore Institute’s most recently hired professor. From 1988 to 1994, she was the associate director of the East Asian Studies Center at Indiana, where she was responsible for securing funding for and planning research, instructional, and outreach programs on East Asia. Her new position as assistant professor calls on similar skills as she works with undergraduate and graduate students both in and out of the classroom.

As the director of undergraduate studies, Tuohy is dedicated to increasing the number of undergraduates who major in folklore and ethnomusicology. She appreciates her position, since without it, she wouldn’t have much time to talk to undergraduates. Aside from her work developing the institute’s undergraduate program, Tuohy is also teaching courses in ethnomusicology.

Tuohy spent this past summer conducting research in China as part of a longer, 12-year project on folksong performance in Northwest China. Tuohy insists that she is studying music in contemporary China, not necessarily “Chinese music.” Her thoughts on this and related issues will soon appear in a book she is writing that examines the issues of genre construction, social meaning, and ethnography.

This year, she also contributed an article on film music of the 1930s to a book on Chinese film. The editor considers her work pioneering. Tuohy is already planning a second book, one that explores the relationship between tourism and Chinese expressive culture. She hopes to begin research in Ireland, where she will also examine the relationship between tourism and music.
Alumni profile: Jack Williams, PhD'85

Jack Williams is a tenured professor in the English department at Spartanburg Methodist College. After finishing a master's degree in English, Williams received a comprehensive fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation to study folklore at Indiana University. The variety of subjects he explored at the institute prepared him for the complex and demanding schedule of teaching. "The Folklore Institute is one of the last bastions of liberal arts in the nation," he says. "I knew I wanted to teach freshman composition from a cultural and linguistic point of view. Indiana University offered me the freedom to design a curriculum to teach students from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds."

At SMC, a two-year college, the courses he teaches seldom have the word "folklore" in their titles. However, as Williams notes, "it's impossible to teach English without teaching folklore. Our entire freshman writing program centers around ethnic diversity in literature and society. Our students examine the problems created by ethnic conflicts in the U.S. and write essays which pose solutions. We use folklore to teach writing. We use folklore to teach appreciation of individual differences."

Williams's favorite course to teach is Creative Writing. A writer since his early teens, he enjoys redesigning this course each year for students who share his love for poetry. Williams also serves as advisor for the SMC literary magazine, Illusions. In addition, he advises the school newspaper, The Trailblazer.

During his 10 years at Spartanburg Methodist College, Williams has won numerous awards. In 1988, he received the Huff Faculty Prize, SMC's highest honor for teachers. In summer 1992, he received a James Still Fellowship to study Appalachian folklore at the University of Kentucky. Recently he was also nominated for the South Carolina Teacher of the Year Award and was named a 1994 Distinguished Professor by the governor of South Carolina. In spite of a heavy teaching load, he continues to be active with folklore and oral history projects throughout the state.
Imagine working with a group of people constituting what is perhaps the most isolated community in America today. Sounds like a social scientist's dream. Clover Williams, MA'91, has found herself in just such a community: prisons. Currently a doctoral student at Indiana University's Folklore Institute, Williams is also the founder and editor of the new journal of prison literature, *Inner Voices*. *Inner Voices* is one of only a handful of journals of prison literature, and it is the only journal of its kind that is ongoing.

That *Inner Voices* includes artistic contributions from prisoners across the country is an important aspect of Williams's editorial vision. "They have a strong identity as Chicanos or white," Williams says, "but prisoners don't have an identity as a group. It's important to give them a sense of that. If they don't have any sense of identity, how can they build themselves?"

While her other work has been successful within the folklore community, Williams herself values *Inner Voices* the most. "This is more important than other stuff I've done," she says, "because I give other people a voice rather than myself."

People on the inside are enjoying *Inner Voices*. Prison teachers find the journal useful in their classes and have shown Williams great support for her work. Prisoners also appreciate the opportunity to express themselves. The popularity and importance of the journal is ever-growing; while submissions only trickled in for the first volume, many more authors have written in for the second, Williams explains, holding up bundles of envelopes just picked up from the journal's post office box.

Williams intends for *Inner Voices* to be read by a large audience. Williams has taken many of the submissions with her to poetry readings. "It really holds its own with literary journals," she says. "I think it has a function for people on the inside and on the outside. And plus, it's really good."

In addition to her dissertation, her marriage, and her work (teaching basic living skills to institutionalized people), Williams keeps herself busy by selecting material for new volumes, promoting the journal, and formatting each issue. The second volume of *Inner Voices* appeared in October 1995. It is available at some bookstores and can always be purchased through the journal's address: Inner Voices, P.O. Box 4500, #219, Bloomington, IN, 47402. Individuals may subscribe to the journal for $8/year ($5/year for inmates). Institutional subscriptions are $10/year. *Inner Voices* also accepts donations.

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**Faculty updates**

Thanks to her Fulbright Teaching Fellowship, Inta Carpenter was able to travel to Riga, Latvia. With Richard Bauman, Carpenter helped plan a symposium in Latvia. Their participation was partially funded by IREX.

Linda Dégh won the prestigious International Prize of Ethnoanthropological Studies. She also recently published two more books. Her *American Folklore and the Mass Media* was released in 1994. Dégh's new book, *Narratives in Society: A Performer-Centered Study of Narration*, was just celebrated at a recent book-signing party sponsored by the Folklore Institute.

Hasan El-Shamy’s recent book was also featured at a book-signing party. The Folklore Institute witnessed El-Shamy autographing first printings of his *Folk Traditions of the Arab World: A Guide to Motif Classification*.

Henry Glassie was given the 1995 Outstanding Achievement in the Arts Award by the Assembly of Turkish American Associates. His *Turkish Traditional Art Today* was named among the notable books of the year by the *New York Times* and is now in its third printing.

Roger Janelli was recently promoted to full professor. He has also become a member of the board of directors of the Korean Folklore Society. Janelli and Camille Rice have been selected to receive the 1996 Leo F. Solt Distinguished Service Award of the Graduate School.

John William Johnson has been elected as an associate fellow of the Folklore Fellows. This organization is an international network of folklorists geared towards promoting scholarly contacts, publication activities, and research training. It is operated by the Finnish Academy of Science and Letters.

After being granted tenure, Gregory Schremp is now an associate professor in the Folklore Institute. He was recently invited to speak at Harvard on a panel discussing contemporary perspectives on cosmology.

As associate director of the Indiana Center for Global Change and World Peace, Beverly Stoeltje helped organize a conference with the Cultural Studies Program. Stoeltje also worked with Inta Carpenter to organize a conference on Folklore in the Academy. Both events were held in Bloomington.

Ruth M. Stone, the new chair of the folklore department, has been elected president of the Society for Ethnomusicology.
Edson Richmond recited a verse of "The Folklore Shuffle," performed by the folklore faculty and staff, at the 1986 End-of-the-Year Faculty Roast. Richmond was acting chair for 1985–86.

I've signed all your vouchers, heard all your gripes,
And learned all too much about you folklore types.
The students are fine, and the faculty too,
But neither Aarne nor Thompson could classify you.
My forte is ballads, and not those who produce them,
But our friendship has taught me, not to ignore them.
Thus as chairman I leave, and my voice I won't muffle
When I say I enjoyed doing the Folklore Shuffle.