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"Folk revivals" have been with us for more than 200 years, not only in music and song but in traditional arts and crafts, dance, and storytelling. *Transforming Tradition*, while not a comprehensive record, presents a thoughtful introduction with historical, social, and artistic perspectives. The anthology would have been even stronger with the inclusion of more women, as scholars and as performers. This is not only a matter of equal representation but a long and abiding issue of artistic and academic presence.

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Katharine YOUNG (ed.), Bodyflore (Publications of the American Folklore Society, New Series, Patrick B. Mullen (ed.), Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1993, pp. xiv+261, ISBN 0-87049-799-5).

I was excited when I first heard of Bodylore. Frankly, I am frustrated in my teaching on the social construction of gendered and sexual identities, an area where traditional culture has powerful influence, that I am unable to draw on more folkloristic interpretations. I welcomed a collection of papers with the notion of body as invented cultural artifact at its centre and hoped it would begin to fill in some of the gaps. Having read the book, I am even more convinced of the important contribution folklorists can make to the understanding of constructed identities but I'm still looking for materials to use in class.

The underlying premise here is an engaging one: that the body is not a natural object but through its surface structures and accouterments, bodily practices and rituals, and our language about and representations of the body, it is a culturally invented artifact. As editor Katharine Young writes,

> *Culture is inscribed on the body. Our beliefs about the body, our perceptions of it and the properties we attribute to it, both symbolic and literal, are socially constructed. The body is being invented. The way we hold our bodies, the way we move them, the way we accouter them, display our membership in a culture (xvii).*

Bodylore explores this concept through ten essays on subjects as diverse as Maxine Miska's study of Hakka Funeral Ritual and Dorothy Noyes's paper, "Contesting the Body Politic: The Patum of Berga" to Jane Przybysz's "Quilts and Women's Bodies: Dis-eased and Desiring" and Phyllis Gorfain's work on body puns in Shakespeare's Hamlet. Other papers include Elizabeth Wickett's

exploration of folk religion of Luxor in Upper Egypt, Susan Slyomovics's examination of American spa culture, and Katharine Young's discussion of medical treatment of the corpse. Papers reach across disciplines to ably draw together issues and perspectives. Some theories of Bodylore consider the materiality of the body and its carnivalization in a Bakhtinian vein; some follow Mary Douglas's focus on body boundaries and ritual contamination; others adopt Marxist or feminist views of materializing the body, and still others adhere to a social constructionist notion of the body as a symbolic object (vii).

Young does not arrange papers thematically, but phenomenologically, that is, according to their conception of the body. As a result, groupings ask the reader to think about the body in new ways at the same time they convincingly argue for the international and pervasive nature of the body as cultural artifact. Young's five sections: "Inscription/Exscription"; "Boundary/Transgression"; "Grotesque/Ethereal"; "Embodiment/Disembodiment"; and "Body/Text" thereby link papers that sometimes initially seem completely unconnected. Thus, Susan Ritchie's comparison of literary criticism and the treatment of bodies in medicine, and Barbie Zelizer's discussion of assassination narratives about John F. Kennedy, fit comfortably together as contrasting textualizations of the body.

As Young points out, gender is only one possible symbolic construction. Therefore, while this discourse is represented in papers such as Deborah Kapchan's study of Moroccan women's body signs, it is not a central theme. Admittedly, my interest biases me in this regard, but I would like to see the limited discussion of gender extended. More serious, however, is the collection's heterosexist bias. None of the articles explore constructions of the body from gay and/or lesbian perspectives. Bodylore arose from paper sessions of the AFS so gaps are understandable. Nevertheless, this omission seems particularly obvious and unfortunate.

My final complaint is that the tradition of clear folkloristic writing is not consistently present here. Much of the book, especially the introductory sections, is densely written. This is regrettable because while students might be intrigued by the concepts and subjects of Bodylore, I think many undergraduates would find the collection difficult. This inaccessibility is ironic given an annotated bibliography that seems geared toward a student reader.

But I don't want to sound overly critical. I enjoyed Bodylore and recommend it. The concept is fascinating and individual papers stimulating. I've already made use of Jane Przybysz's fresh approach to quilting as écriture feminine and Barbie Zeizer's work on JFK narratives in my own work on women's oral narrative. And, most of all, this collection should be applauded for pointing future directions. Contributors to Bodylore make a solid contribution to scholarship by doing what folklorists do best: applying theoretical perspectives in an interdisciplinary way to subjects of everyday life.

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