

A Folklore Sampler From the Maritimes : With a Bibliographical Essay on The Folktale in English. Edited by Herbert Halpert (St. John's : Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982. Pp. xix + 273, notes, appendices, bibliography, \$9.95.)

Jim Hornby

Volume 5, numéro 1-2, 1983

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1081221ar>

DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/1081221ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Association Canadienne d'Ethnologie et de Folklore

ISSN

1481-5974 (imprimé)

1708-0401 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Hornby, J. (1983). Compte rendu de [*A Folklore Sampler From the Maritimes : With a Bibliographical Essay on The Folktale in English.* Edited by Herbert Halpert (St. John's : Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982. Pp. xix + 273, notes, appendices, bibliography, \$9.95.)]. *Ethnologies*, 5(1-2), 104–105. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1081221ar>

du folklore est très récent au Canada français. On peut malgré tout affirmer qu'on atteindra la véritable ethnologie lorsqu'on aura dépassé la typologie et la monographie descriptive. Aussi, le volume de Denise Rodrigue se justifie sans aucun doute mais il se doit d'être dépassé.

La bibliographie que l'auteure nous propose est symptomatique de cette lacune analytique. En effet, tout comme son étude privilégie la présentation de sources au détriment de l'élaboration d'une problématique, la bibliographie manifeste une carence d'ouvrages théoriques et accorde le primat aux sources imprimées. Mais dans cette perspective, elle n'en constitue pas moins, avec plus de cinq cents titres, un recensement documentaire d'importance.

D'un point de vue plus technique, la présentation du volume est agréable, ce qui facilite sa consultation. La mise en page est aérée et la division des parties est claire et adéquate. De plus, l'utilisation de deux grosseurs de caractères typographiques permet de distinguer facilement les citations de sources de l'ensemble du texte. La systématique du plan assure un repérage rapide des informations. L'ouvrage de Denise Rodrigue, même s'il est d'une lecture facile, se rapproche bien plus de l'ouvrage de référence. Aussi, les renseignements se doivent d'être aisément accessibles. Dans cette perspective, le travail d'ethnographie qui a été effectué a une grande valeur.

Dans l'ensemble, on peut dire que ce volume sur les fêtes calendaires du cycle de Pâques est un ouvrage de base en ethnographie. Ce n'est certes pas une étude complexe, abstraite ou inaccessible. Il n'est pas pour autant une simple entreprise de vulgarisation. Au contraire, l'érudition dont il fait preuve, le nombre et la variété des informations auxquelles il donne accès, font qu'il s'adresse à un public informé. Néanmoins le langage et le plan adoptés rendent sa consultation aisée et font de lui un ouvrage à caractère encyclopédique. Aussi, on peut dire que si la recherche a été amorcée et que des outils de travail s'élaborent

petit à petit, tout ou presque est encore à faire. En effet, non seulement est-il important de persévérer dans cette lignée ethnographique pour les cycles autres que celui de Pâques, mais il faut aussi passer à un autre niveau, celui de l'analyse.

Valérie GASCON
Université Laval
Sainte-Foy, Québec

A Folklore Sampler From the Maritimes : With a Bibliographical Essay on The Folktale in English

Edited by Herbert Halpert

(St. John's : Department of Folklore, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1982. Pp. xix + 273, notes, appendices, bibliography, \$9.95.)

This collection is a welcome building-block for Canadian folklorists, with particularly felicitous application for Atlantic provinces teachers. It originated as a student-collecting "exercise" directed by the editor, Herbert Halpert, while he was a visiting professor at Mount Allison University, Sackville, New Brunswick, a few years ago. Obtaining the assistance of students and others in the university community, Halpert accumulated manuscripts containing folk-narrative and other folklore items. With this material arranged in chapters, each introduced and followed by extensive notes, and with supplementary materials and a bibliography added, the present volume emerges.

While the items are generally as incomplete as might be expected from first-time collectors, the diversity of their collectanea is instructive, especially for those who have an interest in folklore collecting but are tentative about making the leap of faith into action. They will also find the familiarity of many of these items reassuring.

Halpert's framing comments and annotations are the highlights of the collection, although their bibliophilia may be as daunting to some as it is envying-causing to others. Among his many critical remarks about other collectors one is surprised to find no references to fieldwork guides; unfortunately, by implication the collecting of books, much more than field research, seems to be the hallmark of the professional folklorist. In any case, I felt that the note by one of his collectors that "an unobtrusive tape recorder" (p. 18) was used deserved some comment lest hidden recording appear to be condoned.

For those readers with a deeper interest in the important comparative aspect of folkloristics, the editor's surveys, comments, and bibliography are a treat as well as a resource. But the title *A Folklore Sampler From the Maritimes* should not be mistaken as indicative of comprehensive regional coverage. Firstly, only a few French-language items are presented. As this is a random collecting project no conclusions need be drawn, but some mention might have been made of the fact that Acadian folklore is under-represented.

Secondly, I trust that it will not seem parochial of me to point out the near-absence of Prince Edward Island material in the collectanea, notes and bibliography. Of these the editorial omissions are harder to reconcile, especially where (pp. 36-43) the editor is primarily discussing Maritime folk-narrative collections. Among the more obvious uncited Island collections are several entitled *Folklore Prince Edward Island*, and those by James and Gertrude Pendergast and Sterling Ramsay (both 1973) remain in print. While neither is exemplary, both are on a par with some others cited from sister provinces. Furthermore, the citation of Walter Shaw's *Tell Me the Tales* (p. 41) fails to identify it as an Island book where the context suggests that it is from Nova Scotia, and the Island's Micmac population is oddly ignored in this sentence (p. 47): "The Micmac Indians

are the main tribe in Atlantic Canada, especially in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland." In a book "from the Maritimes" it seems perverse to nearly ignore Prince Edward Island while Newfoundland (important to, but not among the Maritime Provinces) is covered in some detail by the editor.

Aside from this omission, the notes combine a good use of standard reference tools with citations from less common sources, many of these from the British Isles. Both the mundane and specialized sides of folklore studies are presented, from common proverbs to rare books, and Halpert's comments contain many good suggestions for further research. I especially enjoyed the chapter on child-lore.

With the dowdy functionalism of the CCFCS Mercury Series as a standard, it may seem churlish to criticize the production details here, but I note that the cover combines clashing typefaces with a woodcut illustration whose too-precious quaintness is quite at odds with the book.

Halpert's "preliminary mapping" must be considered a success, and I hope that it will indeed "inspire more extensive regional collecting" (p. 187) — and Maritime folklore publications as well. Certainly this book is a grand initiative for Maritime folklorists. Miscellaneous, approachable, and heuristic, *A Folklore Sampler From the Maritimes* is already in the vanguard for folklore studies in this region.

Jim HORNBY
PEI Heritage Foundation
Charlottetown, PEI

L'hiver dans la culture québécoise (XVII^e - XIX^e siècles)

*Par Sophie-Laurence Lamontagne
(Québec : Institut québécois de
recherche sur la culture, 1983. 194 p.)*