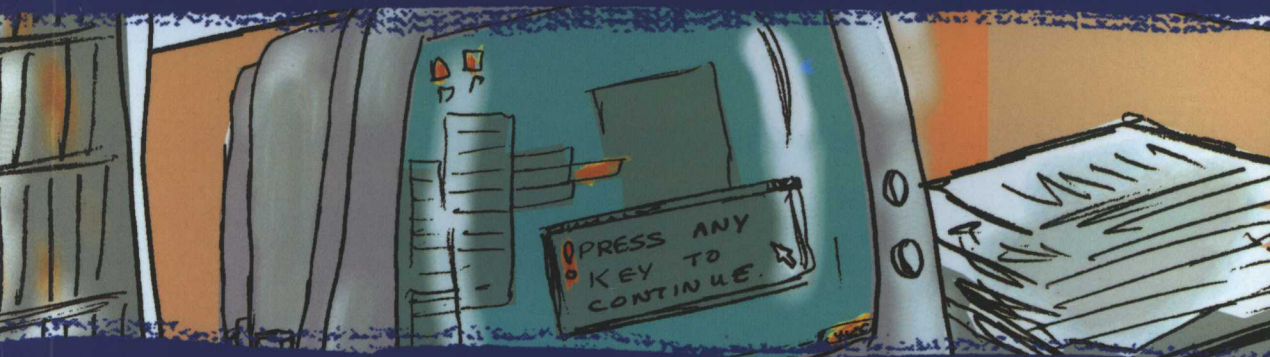
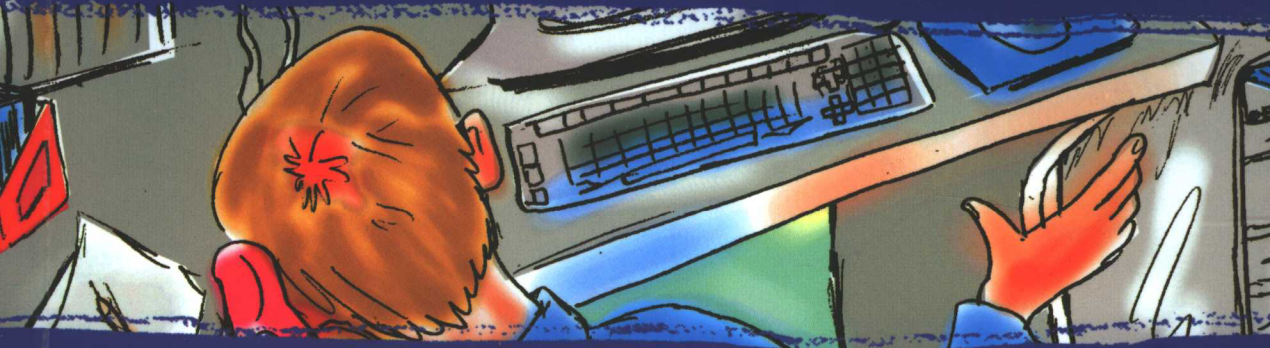


NORTH AMERICAN FOLKLORE

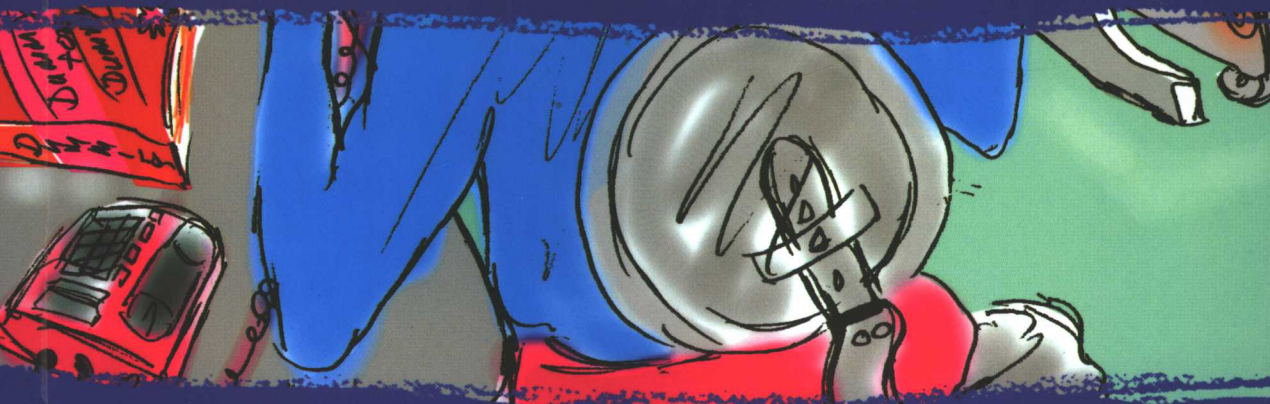


CONTEMPORARY

by Shirley Brinkerhoff



FOLKLORE



外文出版社
FOREIGN LANGUAGES PRESS

NORTH AMERICAN FOLKLORE

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丛书顾问: Dr. Alan Jabbour

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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

当代都市传奇 / (美) 布林克奥夫 (Brinkerhoff, S.) 著; 蒋呈丽译. —北京: 外文出版社, 2006

(北美民俗文化阅读)

ISBN 7-119-04446-X

I. 当... II. ①布... ②蒋... III. ①英语—汉语—对照读物②风俗习惯—北美洲—现代 IV. H319.4: K

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字 (2006) 第 046701 号

外文出版社网址:

<http://www.flp.com.cn>

外文出版社电子信箱:

info@flp.com.cn

sales@flp.com.cn

著作权合同登记图字: 01-2005-6430

美国 Mason Crest Publishers 授权外文出版社在中国大陆地区独家出版发行英汉对照版

北美民俗文化阅读

当代都市传奇

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责任编辑 李子亮 王 蕊

封面设计 吴 涛

出版发行 外文出版社

社 址 北京市百万庄大街 24 号

邮政编码 100037

电 话 (010) 68995963

(010) 68329514/68327211 (推广发行部)

印 刷 三河市汇鑫印务有限公司

经 销 新华书店/外文书店

开 本 16 开

字 数 150 千字

印 数 0001—5000 册

印 张 8.625

版 次 2006 年第 1 版第 1 次印刷

装 别 平

书 号 ISBN 7-119-04446-X

定 价 19.80 元

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Folklore grows from long-age seeds. Just as an acorn sends down roots even as it shoots up leaves across the sky, folklore is rooted deeply in the past and yet still lives and grows today. It spreads through our modern world with branches as wide and sturdy as any oak's; it grounds us in yesterday even as it helps us make sense of both the present and the future.



INTRODUCTION

by Dr. Alan Jabbour



What do a tale, a joke, a fiddle tune, a quilt, a jig, a game of jacks, a saint's day procession, a snake fence, and a Halloween costume have in common? Not much, at first glance, but all these forms of human creativity are part of a zone of our cultural life and experience that we sometimes call "folklore."

The word "folklore" means the cultural traditions that are learned and passed along by ordinary people as part of the fabric of their lives and culture. Folklore may be passed along in verbal form, like the urban legend that we hear about from friends who assure us that it really happened to a friend of their cousin. Or it may be tunes or dance steps we pick up on the block, or ways of shaping things to use or admire out of materials readily available to us, like that quilt our aunt made. Often we acquire folklore without even fully realizing where or how we learned it.

Though we might imagine that the word "folklore" refers to cultural traditions from far away or long ago, we actually use and enjoy folklore as part of our own daily lives. It is often ordinary, yet we often remember and prize it because it seems somehow very special. Folklore is culture we share with others in our communities, and we build our identities through the sharing. Our first shared identity is family identity, and family folklore such as shared meals or prayers or songs helps us develop a sense of belonging. But as we grow older we learn to belong to other groups as well. Our identities may be ethnic, religious, occupational, or regional—or all of these, since no one has only one cultural identity. But in every case, the identity is anchored and strengthened by a variety of cultural

traditions in which we participate and share with our neighbors. We feel the threads of connection with people we know, but the threads extend far beyond our own immediate communities. In a real sense, they connect us in one way or another to the world.

传说故事、笑话、小提琴曲、棉被、快步舞曲、抓子游戏、圣徒日游行、蛇形栅栏、万圣节服装，这些东西有什么共同之处？乍看上去似乎没什么，但是所有这些人类的创造形式都属于我们文化生活和经验中的一部分，我们有时称之为“民俗”。

“民俗”指的是一种文化传统，老百姓把这种传统作为生活和文化架构中的一部分来学习和继承。民俗可以是以口头形式传播的，就像我们在朋友那儿听到的都市传奇故事，讲述者会向我们保证那确实是发生在他们堂兄的一个朋友身上的真事；也可以是我们无意间从街上学到的曲调或舞步，或是用已有的材料做出可使用或用来欣赏的东西的方式，就像姨妈缝制的棉被。我们通常已经了解了一些民俗知识，然而却不能确切地意识到是从哪里、又是怎样得到它们的。

尽管我们可以认为“民俗”这个词指的是来自于很久以前或从很远的地方流传而来的文化传统，而事实上，我们是把它作为日常生活的一部分来利用和享受的。它常常是普普通通的，但由于其独特性，我们往往会记住并珍视它。民俗是我们与社会群体中的其他人共享的文化，我们通过这种共享来确立自己的身份特征。我们第一个与他人共享的就是家庭的特征，而家庭习俗——如共享的饭菜、祈祷和歌曲——都帮助我们建立起一种归属感。随着年龄的增长，我们也学会了从属于其他的社会群体。我们的身份特征可以是种族的、宗教的、职业的、区域性的或兼而有之，因为没有人只具有一种文化特征。然而无论如何，各色各样的文化传统都是这些特征赖以生存并得以壮大发展的支柱。我们置身于这种文化传统之中，并与邻人共同分享。我们能够感受到自己与相识的人之间的关联，然而这种关联远远超出了我们所直属的生活范围。实际上，这种关联是以某种方式将我们与世界连接在一起。

Folklore possesses features by which we distinguish ourselves from each other. A certain dance step may be African American, or a certain story urban, or a certain hymn Protestant, or a certain food preparation Cajun. Folklore can distinguish us, but at the same time it is one of the best ways we introduce ourselves to each other. We learn about new ethnic groups on the North American landscape by sampling their cuisine, and we enthusiastically adopt musical ideas from other communities. Stories, songs, and visual designs move from group to group, enriching all people in the process. Folklore thus is both a sign of identity, experienced as a special marker of our special groups, and at the same time a cultural coin that is well spent by sharing with others beyond our group boundaries.

Folklore is usually learned informally. Somebody, somewhere, taught us that jump rope rhyme we know, but we may have trouble remembering just where we got it, and it probably wasn't in a book that was assigned as homework. Our world has a domain of formal knowledge, but folklore is a domain of knowledge and culture that is learned by sharing and imitation rather than formal instruction. We can study it formally—that's what we are doing now!—but its natural arena is in the informal, person-to-person fabric of our lives.

Not all culture is folklore. Classical music, art sculpture, or great novels are forms of high art that may contain folklore but are not themselves folklore. Popular music or art may be built on folklore themes and traditions, but it addresses a much wider and more diverse audience than folk music or folk art. But even in the world of popular and mass culture, folklore keeps popping up around the margins. E-mail is not folklore—but an e-mail smile is. And college football is not folklore—but the wave we do at

the stadium is.

This series of volumes explores the many faces of folklore throughout the North American continent. By illuminating the many aspects of folklore in our lives, we hope to help readers of the series to appreciate more fully the richness of the cultural fabric they either possess already or can easily encounter as they interact with their North American neighbors.

民俗所具有的特点将我们与他人区分开来,例如某种舞步可能是非裔美洲人所特有的,某个故事是属于都市风格的,某首赞美诗是新教徒们吟唱的,某种烹调方法是法国移民的后裔发明的。民俗可以识别出我们,同时它也是我们彼此介绍的最佳方式之一。我们通过品尝他们的食品来了解北美大陆上新的种族群体,我们也可以从其他社会群体中汲取音乐的灵感。故事、歌曲以及形象化的图案在不同群体间传播,并在传播的过程中使所有人受益。因而民俗既是身份的特征、特殊群体的特殊标记,同时也是一种文化货币,通过与我们群体范围之外的人共享而实现它的价值。

民俗通常是人们在不拘形式的情形下学到的。有人,在某个地方,教会了我们那首跳绳的歌谣,然而我们可能记不起到底是在什么地方学到的,也不可能是从某本老师布置课后要读的书里看到的。在我们的世界中有正规知识的领域,然而民俗的领域却是通过共享和模仿,而不是通过正规学习来获得的。我们可以中规中矩地研习它——这正是我们现在正在做的——但是它天然的舞台却是在生活中非正式的、人与人之间的交流模式中。

并非所有的文化都属于民俗的范畴。古典音乐、艺术雕刻或长篇名著属于高层次的艺术形式,它们可能包含民俗的成分,但其本身并不是民俗的一部分。流行音乐或艺术可能基于民俗的主题和传统,但它们面对的是比民间音乐和艺术更为广泛和多样化的群体。然而,即便在流行文化和大众文化的领域里,民俗也一直不断地在边缘地带崭露头角。电子邮件不是民俗的一种——但电子邮件里的笑脸却是;大学足球不是民俗的一种——但我们在体育场中掀起的阵阵人浪却是。

本系列书探讨了北美大陆上民俗文化的众多方面。民俗作为文化的一个组成元素,人们或者已经拥有,或者在平时的交往中会轻易地碰到。通过对生活中民俗文化各个方面的解读,希望能够帮助读者更充分地品味民俗文化的丰富性。



Contemporary folklore is full of mystery, wonder, and humor. Like all folklore, it finds patterns in our daily lives; it warns us against the world's dangers; and it provides us with insight and meaning.



Folklore Today

Urban Legends

今日民俗

都市传奇



The story of the dog that choked on human fingers is both horrifying and funny. In one form or another, it has traveled around North America.



The April 20, 1982 edition of *Woman's World* magazine printed the following strange story:

A weird thing happened to a woman at work. She got home one afternoon and her German shepherd was in convulsions. So she rushed the dog to a vet, then raced home to get ready for a date. As she got back in the door, her phone rang. It was the vet, telling her that two human fingers had been lodged in her dog's throat. The police arrived and they all followed a bloody trail to her bedroom closet, where a young burglar huddled—moaning over his missing thumb and forefinger.

1982年4月20日的《妇女世界》杂志刊载了下面这个奇怪的故事：

一件奇怪的事发生在了一名职业妇女身上。一天下午她回到家，发现她的德国牧羊犬正剧烈地痉挛。于是她迅速将狗送到一个兽医那里，然后赶回家去准备一个约会。就在他回到家的时候，家里的电话响了。是兽医打来的，告诉她两个手指卡在了她的狗的喉咙里。警察赶到了，他们沿着斑斑血迹来到了她的卧室柜子前面，结果发现一个年轻的窃贼在那里缩成一团——正在为他失去的拇指和食指呜咽啜泣。

Jan Harold Brunvand decided to investigate what he calls the “choking dog” story, and gives a fascinating history of where and when this urban legend has traveled. He was able to trace it back as far as June 24, 1981, when the Phoenix, Arizona, *New Times* published it. Columnist Ron Hudspeth reported it in the *Atlanta Journal*¹ on June 25, 1981. The story showed up again on July 4, 1981, in the Lincoln, Nebraska, *Lincoln Journal*², and Associated Press writer Jim Klahn researched the story and reported on July 19 of that year in the Portland *Oregonian* that the story was nothing more than a “transcontinental rumor so far.”



简·哈罗德·布朗凡决定调查他称之为“被噎着的狗”的故事，并且总结出了关于这个都市传奇是在哪儿、在什么时候流传开来的一段激动人心的历史。他把这个故事追根溯源到1981年6月24日，当时亚里桑那州凤凰城的《新时报》登载了它。专栏作家罗恩·赫兹佩斯于1981年6月25日在《亚特兰大宪法报》上报道了它。1981年7月4日这则故事在内布拉斯加州林肯城的《林肯日报》上再次现身，美联社记者吉姆·克朗调查了这个故事，并于当年7月19日在波特兰市的《俄勒冈人报》上作了报道，称这个故事至今为止仅仅是一个“横贯北美大陆的流言”而已。

¹ Atlanta Journal: 全称为 Atlanta Journal-Constitution。

² Lincoln Journal: 是一份地方性报纸。另有 Lincoln Journal Star, Lincoln, Nebraska, 译为《林肯每日星报》。此处指的应该是《林肯日报》。

³ Richard M. Dorson: 曾任美国民俗学会主席。

Next, the choking dog story appeared in the *Tampa Bay Star* on August 19, and was reported under the headline "Reporter's Dogged Search Reveals Some Hard-Bitten Truths," in the *Hamilton, Ontario, Canada Spectator* on December 1. It surfaced again in the *Benton Harbor and St. Joseph, Missouri, Herald-Palladium* on December 31, 1981.

In the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* of February 3, 1982, Digby Diehl recorded a slightly different version of the choking dog story and wrote a column describing how he heard a variation at a party in Santa Barbara, where a friend of his repeated it as though it had happened to an actual person she knew. The story eventually traveled on to Palos Verdes, then Long Island, then San Francisco.

接下来,“被噎着的狗”的故事于8月19日出现在坦帕的《星港》上,12月1日在加拿大安大略省汉密尔顿市的《观察家报》上以“记者的顽强追踪揭示了一些可靠的事实”为标题被报道。1981年12月31日它在密苏里州本顿港和圣约瑟夫城的《帕拉丁先驱报》上再次出现。

1982年2月3日,在《洛杉矶先驱考察家报》上,迪格比·迪尔记录了一个和“被噎着的狗”只有些微差别的故事,还写了一篇专栏,讲述他是怎样在圣芭芭拉市的一个聚会上听他的一个朋友讲述这个版本的,这位朋友的讲述听上去像是这个故事发生在她认识的某个真人身上。这个故事继续流传到帕洛斯弗迪斯,再到长岛,最后到了旧金山。

One American folklorist, Richard M. Dorson³, coined the term "fakelore" for stories, such as many of the Paul Bunyan tales, which have little tradition underlying them and are actually the product of professional invention and rewriting.

美国民俗学家理查德·M·多尔逊创造出“伪民俗”这个术语来形容那些没有多少传统作为基础、实际上是专业创作和再创造产物的故事,比如保罗·布尼安笔下的很多故事。

Although the author of the *Woman's World* article stated clearly that the story of the choking German shepherd was not true, even that appearance of the story will help spread it as an urban legend. At least some readers (perhaps those who miss the author's disclaimer¹) will retell the story and discuss it with others, and the story will continue to spread as an event that happened to the friend of a friend, a friend of an aunt's, an aunt of a friend's. . . . Such stories have come to be known as urban legends, and they make up the largest part of contemporary folklore, the folklore that is unique to our modern culture.

Jan Harold Brunvand defines folklore as the “traditional, unofficial, non-institutional part of culture. It encompasses all knowledge, understandings, values, attitudes, assumptions, feelings, and beliefs transmitted in traditional forms by word of mouth or by customary examples.” Folklore includes many oral and verbal forms, customs, and material traditions, such as crafts, art, architecture, costumes, and foods.

虽然《妇女世界》上那篇文章的作者明确声明，被噎着的德国牧羊犬的故事不是真的，但是故事在杂志上被登出来这一点还是帮助它作为一个都市传奇得到了广泛传播。至少一些读者（或许是那些忽略了作者对故事真实性进行过否定的读者）会再把这个故事告诉别的人，和别人进行讨论，然后这个故事会继续传播下去，变成一件发生在某个朋友的朋友身上的真事，或者是某人阿姨的朋友，或者是某个朋友的阿姨……类似这样的故事被称为都市传奇，它们构成了当代民俗——即对我们的当代文化而言独一无二、无可取代的民俗——的最主要的组成部分。

简·哈罗德·布朗凡将民俗定义为“文化中传统的、非官方的、非制度化的部分。它包括所有以传统形式——口头语言或者风俗习惯——传送的知识、理解、价值、态度、假定、感受和信仰”。民俗包括许多口头形式、习俗和物态传统——比如手工艺、艺术、建筑、服装和食物。

■ disclaimer: *n.* 不承担责任的声明；放弃（弃权）声明