

Short List for The Katharine Briggs Award 2011

Gary Alan Fine and Bill Ellis, *The Global Grapevine: Why Rumors of Terrorism, Immigration, and Trade Matter* (Oxford University Press)

Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, with Kris McAbee, *Ballads and Broadsides in Britain, 1500-1800* (Ashgate)

Alessandro Portelli, *They Say in Harlan County: An Oral History* (Oxford University Press)

Steve Roud, *The Lore of the Playground: One Hundred Years of Children's Games, Rhymes and Traditions* (Random House)

Jay M. Smith, *Monsters of the Gévaudan: The Making of a Beast* (Harvard University Press)

Alexandra Walsham, *The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland* (Oxford University Press)

Jack Zipes, *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (Routledge).

The Katharine Briggs Award 2011 Judges' Report on the Winner and Short Listed Titles.

The Winner is *Folk Tales, Trickster Tales and Legends of the Supernatural from the Pinelands of New Jersey* by Herbert Halpert, edited by John Widdowson (Edwin Mellen Press). This is a selection of more than 300 brief but vigorous oral narratives from the numerous examples recorded by Herbert Halpert during repeated visits to New Jersey, mostly between 1939 and 1942, which provide a picture of traditional story-telling as practiced in one English-speaking white community of rural America. The author's extensive notes set the stories in a wider context of Anglo-Celtic and European tale-patterns and beliefs. This is a monumental work of scholarship which greatly enriches our knowledge, and will be a permanent work of reference for folklorists.

The First Runner-up is *The Global Grapevine: Why Rumors of Terrorism, Immigration and Trade Matter* (Oxford UP), by Gary Alan Fine and Bill Ellis. The authors show how rumours and urban legends express the fear and suspicion many Americans feel when in contact with foreign cultures. Themes covered include conspiracy theories, hatred of immigrants, fear of foreign travel and foreign trade, kidnapping, and trade in body organs. The tales are often implausible, melodramatic, even paranoid, yet they both express and reinforce widespread attitudes.

The Second Runner-up is Jay M. Smith's *Monsters of the Gévaudan: The Making of a Beast* (Harvard UP). This is a study of a panic which swept France in 1764 when a peasant girl was killed and partially eaten by some wild beast; a spate of deaths

followed, and the 'beast' rapidly assumed legendary dimensions when efforts to hunt it down all failed. The author shows how this legend was shaped and disseminated not by the peasants themselves (whose views are unrecorded) but by elite individuals and groups such as politicians, hunters, journalists and so on, to serve interests of their own.

Ballads & Broadides in Britain 1500-1800 (Ashgate), edited by Patricia Fumerton and Anita Guerrini, is a multi-disciplinary collection of 15 papers on the development of the broadside print in popular culture. Aspects discussed include definition and collection; the emphasis on 'strange news', monstrosity, and crime; technology; authorship; international diffusion.

They Say in Harlan County: An Oral History (Oxford UP): For 25 years, Alessandro Portelli has been conducting interviews among the people of Harlan County, a coal-mining community in the Appalachians. The result is *They Say in Harlan County*. It gives a vivid and detailed picture of the lives, sufferings, political struggles and cultural traditions of generations of miners from pioneer times to the present day.

The Lore of the Playground (Random House) by Steve Roud sets out 'to disprove the pessimists who think children no longer play, and to show how games have been endlessly modified and reinvented ... over the past century.' It covers a broad range geographically and temporally, drawing on interviews with children, and also an internet questionnaire which elicited many responses from adults. The result is a lively and authentic collection of material from this important field.

The Reformation of the Landscape: Religion, Identity and Memory in Early Modern Britain and Ireland (Oxford UP) by Alexandra Walsham offers a penetrating historical study of the impact of the Reformation upon the perception of landscape, which had a role both in constructing Protestant social identity and in preserving memories of the Catholic past. This conflict left traces in local folklore of later generations.

In *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (Routledge) Jack Zipes describes a very considerable number of films – British, American, European – which are based on traditional fairy tales or in some cases on authored narratives such as 'Peter Pan' and 'Alice in Wonderland'. His examples include many that are now little known, e.g. short silent films from the early years of cinema, cartoon

versions, puppet versions, etc. Besides detailed plot summaries, Zipes offers a socio-political commentary, with particular attention to patriarchy, gender roles, and the imposition of conventional and/or commercial values on traditional material.

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