

Folklore, Learning and Literacies
The Annual Conference of the Folklore Society

Friday 24 to Sunday 26 April 2020, London

Lore is learning: folklore is a body of knowledge *and* a means of transmission. Vernacular knowledge, and vernacular transmission, each rooted in language.

Languages of sign, symbol and the body confront us daily, some time-honoured, some very new, and how we read them informs how we act, whether to conform, or to rebel. Folklore socialises us into a community of knowledge, but not all communities are generous. Modern media produce myths and reproduce memes, their speed and reach unprecedented. Rumour, misinformation and conspiracy theory have results – from climate-change denial to vaccination scares – which are anything but imaginary.

Formal education and training is no more – or less – formative than the informal, everyday vernacular literacies that we absorb from our peer groups or families. A proverb is a condensed lesson; a ballad or a fairy-tale has a moral more often than not; a rite of passage may encapsulate a trade's culture. And the landscape, whether rural or urban, is a theatre of memory and the backdrop of local legend.

So yes, lore is learning. But how do we learn folklore? How do we learn *about* folklore? This conference of the Folklore Society will address issues such as:

- The uses of traditional folklore in formal education
- The relationship between formal education and vernacular practices
- Informal learning structures in trades and professions
- Family and kin as transmitters of songs and performance traditions
- School idiolects, customs and costumes
- Children's lore and language: topical rhymes, parodies, the child's calendar
- Mnemonics and tongue-twisters
- Proverbs and how they are learnt...or mislearnt
- Acquiring verbal fluency; for example, flyting and rapping
- Schoolchildren in folklore, from Little St. Hugh to the Worst Witch....
- Supernatural beings who impart skills and knowledge
- Folklore in children's literature, television, films, and computer games.

Proposals for papers of twenty minutes should be sent to the Folklore Society at thefolkloresociety@gmail.com, or 50 Fitzroy Street, London W1T 5BT, UK, telephone +44 (0) 203 915 3034, by 12th January 2020

The conference will begin at 2pm on Friday 24th April (registration from 1pm) and will end at lunchtime on Sunday 26th.

Conference fee:

Concessions: £110 (speakers, Folklore Society members)

Standard rate: £160

Fee includes lunches on Saturday and Sunday.

Single day rates available.