



Folklore Unbound: A Concise Introduction

Sabra J. Webber

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Folklore is a powerful resource that not only manages the past, giving it continuity, but also usefully comments on present cultural and social issues. This thoughtful, incisive work first charts important dimensions in the development of folklore studies from the eighteenth century to the present. Next, it marshals the major theoretical issues of the modern discipline, including performance theory, genre theory, the relationship with culture studies and the study of linguistic and musical art forms, the insights of comparative studies, public folklore, and even the place of folklore in the media.

Webber draws heavily on the influential work and maverick charisma of Alan Dundes, world famous folklorist who expanded the definitions of both "folk" and "lore" for thousands of folklore students and underscored why lore should be studied ethnographically and aesthetically. Webber's aim is to evaluate the study of folklore as a tool for understanding the lived experience of various "folk" and for questioning, rather than reinforcing, the status quo. Her work, which draws from the rich methods and materials of many disciplines, shows originality, breadth, and a firm grasp of the history of folkloristics.

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