Folklore, Heritage, and the Public Sphere: Introduction

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Though they tend to occupy separate universes of discourse, public folklore and heritage studies share areas of common concern, including authority and ownership of cultural objects, power asymmetries, safeguarding and sustainability, and the implication of heritage in local economies, politics, and environmental justice. This special issue encompasses multiple domains of public folklore and heritage discourse, including museums, archives, and cultural property issues; culinary tourism; and relations between cultural practitioners, institutions, audiences, and stakeholders. The six essays are based on an online webinar organized by the Fellows of the American Folklore Society that explored a wide range of questions including how communities conceptualize relationships between past and present, remake traditions of the past in the present, integrate heritage and environmental sustainability, and negotiate power dynamics among stakeholders. Following the webinar, small groups assembled in salons to discuss these and related issues. Summaries of the salons follow the six essays. Together, these essays and salon summaries address not only the ways that heritage navigates the past in the present but the temporalities of heritage practice, which imagines the future while considering the ethical and dialogic dimensions of heritage practices and policies.

Keywords:
(from the AFS Ethnographic Thesaurus), archives, environmental protection, fieldwork, foodways, intangible cultural heritage, public folklore, social justice, sustainability, tourism, museums, traditional ecological knowledge

As the COVID-19 pandemic raged on through the winter of 2021, the Fellows of the American Folklore Society (AFS) organized a series of online webinars and salons on folklore topics of interdisciplinary resonance. Designed to advance discourse on key issues of theory and practice, the webinars fostered dialogue during a time of isolation, while engaging an international audience of folklorists and colleagues in allied disciplines. The editors, who were part of the Fellows executive committee at

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the time, sought to create an experimental approach to widely engaged online lectures and discussions, ultimately leading to this publication.

This special issue features the online presentations and small group salon discussions from the first of these webinars and salons. Subsequent webinars and salons held in 2021 and 2022, "Studying Others as (Others)" and "Folklore and Disability Studies," (Prahlad 2024) are also slated for publication in folklore journals. This special issue begins with the revised presentations by the six folklorists who presented during the "Folklore, Heritage and the Public Sphere" webinar. The essays are followed by summaries of the follow-up salon discussions held on April 9, 2021, a month following the March 10 webinar. The discussions explored related topics with suggested themes that were stimulated by the presentations. The salons, like the webinar, were widely promoted through international networks, with an open invitation extended to webinar attendees, listservs, and email blasts. The editors invited three to four registrants from each salon to serve as facilitators and reporters. The morning and afternoon salon summaries on each topic appear together within a separate section of this special issue.

The essays were initially crafted as oral presentations for the webinar. Each presenter produced a written version of their presentation for this special issue; some are close to their original oral presentation, while others are significantly edited.

The salons on five topics relating to the webinar were designed to facilitate discourse among multiple voices of colleagues in folklore, heritage, and related disciplines. For this publication, we faced the challenges of rendering in print discourse that is distinctively different from the expository writing of an academic publication. All salon participants were provided with prompts, including questions and issues to be considered. We include these prompts at the beginning of each salon summary. In the course of their discussions, participants in some salons adhered more closely to these questions and issues than others, and facilitators made different determinations about how and when to steer the conversation. Often, divergences in the discussion led to the emergence of new thoughts. Through our salon summaries, we have tried to accessibly render these architectonics of discourse.

Although we have grouped the morning and afternoon salons together for each topic with an overarching summary, the morning and afternoon sessions had different participants and distinctive threads of discourse. The summary of each salon is represented as a collective discussion. Respecting the requests of participants in several salons for anonymity, most of the summaries appear as currents of discourse without attributing comments to particular individuals. Unless otherwise indicated, the salon summaries were constructed by the special issue Guest Editors, based upon notes provided by salon reporters and in consultation with all participants who are listed at the beginning of each summary.

Folklore, Intangible Cultural Heritage, and Heritage Studies Convergences and Common Concerns

Over the past two decades, heritage studies emerged as a robust interdisciplinary field of study, and intangible cultural heritage (ICH) as a major arena for public practice.

They occupy arenas of academic and practice long inhabited by folklorists. Folklore studies is concerned with many of the theoretical issues now addressed by heritage studies, and public folklore substantially informed the genesis of the ICH movement. While these two arenas generally occupy different universes of discourse, the webinar and follow-up salons illuminated sites of convergence. The essays and salon discussions in this issue address questions of common concern that deal with how the present constructs the past and consider how to humanely prepare for the future: What are the consequences of intervention in ongoing cultural processes? Should scholars and practitioners intervene to foster the sustainability of traditions through engagement with heritage productions and tourism? How can such interventions be carried out in ways that are ethical and dialogic? What are the power dynamics in these relationships, and how can authority be shared and yielded? How can local knowledge and academic expertise coalesce in collaborations with communities? Given that heritage and public folklore interventions inevitably entail adaptations of form, content, and cultural meaning as traditional practices are recontextualized through heritage engagement, how do we evaluate and respond to these transformations? How can concepts of tangible and intangible heritage integrate with environmental conservation frameworks? How can heritage practice be liberatory and employed to advance social justice, and how is it used divisively as an instrument of oppression? What are the positive, negative, and ambivalent dimensions of heritage and its practice?

Folklore's Engagements with Heritage

In the 1980s, "public folklore" became the term for folklore practice that engages the public sphere. It is most closely associated with folklore activity in the United States. In contrast to a received applied folklore paradigm that applied and disseminated expertise and scholarship unidirectionally, public folklore emphasizes mutual engagement with communities. Entailing the recontextualization of traditions from their customary community contexts, public folklore was defined in 1992 as "the representation of folklore and application of folk traditions in new contours and contexts within and beyond the communities within which they originate, often through the collaborative efforts of tradition bearers and folklorists and other cultural specialists" (Baron and Spitzer [1992] 2007b:1). Public folklorists are highly reflexive about their positionality, aware of the character and extent of their mediation, ever more concerned about social justice issues, and increasingly determined to enable the representational authority of the communities with whom they work.[1] Public folklorists work for and with a wide variety of organizations (Jones 1994; Lloyd 2021) and carry out a broad spectrum of types of activities. The speakers and salon participants represent a variety of public folklore activities and organizations, including museums, government cultural agencies, tourism, social service agencies, folklore nonprofit organizations, archives, parks and recreation, festivals, media production organizations, and secondary schools. They also act as public folklorists in state folklife programs and initiatives situated at universities. Non-US salon participants included ethnologists, folklorists, and heritage specialists engaged in many of the same activities and working in similar venues, frequently within the rubric of intangible cultural

heritage. During the salons, US public folklorists and their counterparts from other countries recognized many commonalities.

Public folklore encompasses theory, method, and the practice of folklore in the public sphere. Elsewhere in the world, ICH is comparable to public folklore in the United States. The rapidly growing academic field of heritage studies engages many areas of study with relevance to public folklore. Heritage scholars study and write about topics that include the impact of heritage designations on culture bearers and communities, cultural property, the contestation of heritage, tourism, governmentality as a determinative factor in transforming the relationship of people to their cultural practices, state intervention and local agency, cultural policy, colonial legacies in heritage and decolonization, cultural property, mediation, heritage ideologies, how community is defined, and affect in the experience of heritage.[2] The impact and implications of government policy are major concerns of much of this scholarship.

While the United States lacks federal heritage policy comparable to that of other countries, and authority over heritage is markedly more decentralized, intervention has long been an issue of concern for public folklore scholarship. United States folklorists have been greatly influenced by David Whisnant's premise that "the public sector folklore enterprise is 'unavoidably interventionist'" (1988:233), with profound impacts upon traditions and communities. Unfortunately, US scholarship theorizing intervention along with public folklore's advocacy for community agency has been largely absent from heritage studies scholarship. Yet, public folklorists could readily collaborate with counterparts in other countries, under such international auspices as the 2003 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-a), where an increasing emphasis on community participation in ICH safeguarding highlights parallel concerns among heritage scholars (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-a).

Theorizing Heritage: Folkloristic Perspectives

United States folklorists have made significant contributions to heritage scholarship. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's conceptualization of heritage as metacultural production and as a "new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past" (1998:233) has been foundational to heritage studies, and her consideration of prospective heritage in this special issue represents an important new direction in her thinking about heritage (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2024). During the two decades before heritage studies emerged as a discrete field of study, publications by US folklorists, including *Cultural Conservation: The Protection of Heritage in the United States* (Loomis 1983) and *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage* (Hufford 1994a) propounded an integrated approach to heritage. Like the 1979 Burra Charter produced in Australia[3] and the 1994 Nara Conference on Authenticity in Relation to the World Heritage Convention (Stovel 2008), these two publications advanced an approach to heritage conceptualization and safeguarding incorporating the intangible, setting in motion a movement that placed it on more of an equal plane with the tangible heritage protected through monuments, historic sites, and historic preservation institutions.

Folklorists trained in the United States have carried out theoretical and deeply empirical studies of the impact of intangible cultural heritage designation and protection upon communities and their responses to these designations (e.g., Bendix, Eggert, and Pesselmann 2013; Foster and Gilman 2015; Noyes 2006). Publications by folklorists in the United States are beginning to be addressed to both public folklore and ICH audiences, including the exploration of convergences among and relationships between the two fields (Baron 2016; Hansen and Stefano 2015; Stefano 2016, 2022; Hufford 2016). Illuminating these relationships and stimulating dialogue among public folklore, ICH, and heritage studies are primary objectives of this special issue.

The field of folklore has had a public aspect since its inception. In his essay in this issue, Valdimar Tr. Hafstein (2024) limns an expansive view of disciplinary history. Folklore as a field of study emerged two centuries ago in an era of rapid social and environmental changes brought about by modernity. Documenting expressive forms resulting from these changes, folklore studies inaugurated a trajectory encompassing publications, archives, various kinds of media, cultural institutions, museums, and cultural productions. Folklorists embraced what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (2014) calls a metacultural relationship to expressive forms and practices. Generating reflexive self-consciousness about traditions that are changed upon entering the public sphere, the field of folklore shapes public policy, espouses diversity, and impacts how individuals regard, value, and steward their cultural practices.

Public Folklore, ICH, and Heritage Institutions

Hafstein draws parallels with the heritage field, which over the past half-century has been marked by the growth of heritage institutions and public practice engaging both scholars and practitioners. Heritage institutions, practice, and scholarship have proliferated at a time of extensive social and cultural change propelled by modernization, neoliberalism, decolonization, displacement, forced migration, new media, and tourism. Illuminating cultural practices in order to safeguard them, heritage, like folklore, changes its objects of attention and stewardship. The ICH safeguarding movement associated with the UNESCO 2003 Convention has had multiple impacts upon traditions, changing the relationships to them in source communities, "reforming" as well as revitalizing, and engaging both governments and communities. Hafstein contends that the development of the UNESCO-associated ICH movement, activities of the World Intellectual Property Organization, and community-led heritage production are informed by and reinterpret ideas and perspectives from the field of folklore.

More often than not, folklore ideas and perspectives are adapted by ICH practitioners without attribution or acknowledgment. This unattributed adaptation is typically unwitting, reflecting the largely self-contained universe that public folklore inhabits. The development of public folklore methodologies, theorization, and modes of presentation preceded and anticipated the 2003 ICH Convention by several decades. While public folklore is most notably engaged by folklorists in the United States, comparable activities are conducted under the rubric of ICH by over 180 countries that have ratified the 2003 Convention. The United States is notably absent from the signatories to the Convention.

Yielding Authority for Community-Driven Perspectives and Social Justice

Intangible Cultural Heritage and other contemporary heritage movements lean heavily on the authority of experts, while also emphasizing community involvement in safeguarding processes. Questioning this asymmetrical relationship, public folklore emphasizes dialogic approaches to community engagement. A redistribution of authority is needed to enable communities to represent their cultures on their own terms (Baron 2016, 2021). Diana Baird N'Diaye's (2024) essay describes how folklorists can facilitate the recognition of, and reflection on, heritage by communities with the most at stake. A dynamic process, which N'Diaye calls liberatory, is especially important for communities that are marginalized and oppressed. The process she delineates through examples from her work training community scholars in African diaspora folklife programs entails mutual learning and reciprocal knowledge making. She casts folklorists as facilitators of shared inquiry with communities researching traditions to be shared, adapted, and exchanged, within and across generations. Her collaborators provide fresh perspectives about the interpretation of traditions long studied by folklorists. They shaped every aspect of programming from the initial planning and identification of topics through framing and interpretation of their own cultural heritages. At times, they negotiated, disrupted, and even appropriated the authority of the program's curators. Their training had substantial long-term impacts, including the creation of a folklorist position within Bermuda's Department of Culture, infusing folkloristic perspectives into cultural policies and educational curricula while also shaping cultural representations experienced by tourists.

While heritage can be liberatory, as history has shown and as multiple webinar speakers and salon participants cautioned, it can also be deployed as a weapon and instrument of oppression. For example, N'Diaye offers contemporary examples of the abuses of heritage by White nationalists, including both cultural misappropriation and projections of false equivalencies with the traditions of marginalized communities. She counsels folklorists to be clear-eyed about the potential pitfalls of heritage work, suggesting that the antidote includes ongoing public dialogue about both its positive and negative dimensions.

The "Mutual Engagement, Co-creation, and Yielding Authority for Representation: Strategies and Practices" salons extensively explored the types of power dynamics intrinsic to the relationships among folklorists and communities discussed by N'Diaye. Participants linked public folklore's practices of sharing and yielding authority to a growing imperative to decentralize power structures. Yielding authority should begin with the writing of grant proposals, which could include compensation for community collaborators, and should continue throughout project planning and implementation. The salons also tackled the related unsettled issue of how to cede control and ownership of collections and archives to community members. While the salons consistently stressed the importance of sharing and yielding authority, they nevertheless recognized that folklorists possess authority in initiating and framing projects.

Salon participants lamented the hard reality of adapting to the constraints of cultural organizations and government cultural agencies whose priorities diverge from

those of our field and from the priorities and needs of communities. This means that projects are more short-term than folklorists would prefer. Institutional criteria are prescriptive, limiting equity and the pursuit of social justice. Community partners often also experience time constraints and the financial limitations of projects. Folklorists working within any institutional context are continually learning how their community partners see the world and what they want to accomplish, endeavoring to transfer this knowledge into the deployment of traditions for socially ameliorative purposes. A truly dialogical approach recognizes commonalities as well as differences between folklorists and the communities they serve, as well as within the communities themselves. A number of salon participants stressed that communities are not monolithic. Each has its own hierarchies, range of perspectives, divergent ideologies, and varying relationships with homelands. Exploring the question of who can be considered a folklorist, participants in both "Mutual Engagement" salons acknowledged the growth of community self-documentation and community members' authority for telling their own stories. Community scholar programs, such as those N'Diaye discussed, broaden the compass for who is considered a folklorist.

The "Public Folklore, Heritage and Social Justice" pair of salons compare efforts to ameliorate social inequity through mutual engagement with marginalized communities. Such efforts leverage social justice indirectly by promoting cultural recognition and public affirmation. Although, historically, social justice has not been a primary focus for folklorists, it has become a vibrant area of practice over the past several decades. One outcome is the Advocacy Toolkit on the AFS website, a resource for folklore activists (American Folklore Society 2023). The discussion fathomed the possibilities for, and implications of, the heritage framework for dismantling racism. A key legacy of decades of public folklore practice is an emerging set of tools and strategies for democratizing community-based research, in ways that challenge Western epistemological frameworks, including the approaches of participatory action research.

Cultural Sustainability and Tourism

Tourism offers a primary venue for cross-cultural experience. It is a key dimension of heritage that, like other heritage productions, embodies processes of change and transformation. Tourism is often inescapable when one studies another culture or intervenes as a culture broker. Its problematic aspects are many, but it also offers opportunities for beneficent intervention by folklorists that can enable community control and self-representation while fostering the sustainability and resilience of traditions.

Owe Ronström's (2024) essay underscores the deep implication of tourism in the production of heritage. He notes that tourism is often touted as a solution for economically depressed areas that lack other sources of revenue. Cultural forms and practices are decontextualized and aestheticized as they are adapted and commoditized for tourism markets. Community members often experience alienation and estrangement from their cultural practices in places undergoing gentrification. Social relations become redefined as locals and tourists relate transactionally. Overtourism leads to the outnumbering and displacement of local residents by visitors, in some cases to

an extreme. The alienating effect of tourism turns places into what Ronström calls "meta-places," constructed to meet the images and expectations of tourists. Ronström proposes ways out of dehumanizing mass-host relationships, drawing from his extensive research and applied work in the heavily touristed town of Visby on the island of Gotland in Sweden.

Can folklorists and other kinds of cultural specialists be active agents in creating sustainable tourism? This question is explored in the essays by Ronström (2024) and Lucy M. Long (2024), and in the summaries of discussions in the "Tourism through Folklore: Challenges and Opportunities" salon summaries. The salons brought to light examples of current and prospective approaches for shaping meaningfully interactive tourism encounters. Reconfiguring relationships between tourism's hosts and guests, well-designed interactions can counter stereotyping and objectifying gazes while providing alternatives to highly commodified heritage experiences.

Folklorists are developing new approaches to sustainable tourism through both public folklore practice and critical scholarship. Long's essay on culinary tourism expresses her views about reconciling the competing interests of the tourism industry and folklorists, providing examples of her own concrete solutions. As the tourism industry strives to create memorable experiences while optimizing profits, it tends to simplify, homogenize, and ossify foodways. Tourism as a commercial enterprise has a major impact on shaping tastes through inventing, reifying, and marketing foods seen as the most profitable. Adding value, heritage turns foodways into tourist attractions. Long's examples include a culinary tourism trail she created in Northwest Ohio in collaboration with local tourism and economic development organizations designed to educate about and valorize regional foodways, and her plan for a soda bread trail in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Irish project would, she indicates, demonstrate cultural commonalities and differences while validating a food often overlooked as quotidian, and by contributing to peace initiatives. Through collaborations with the tourism industry and government tourist entities, public folklorists work toward maintaining the distinctiveness and sustainability of foodways, with an emphasis on public education.

The COVID-19 pandemic sharpened our focus on the social, cultural, and economic impacts of tourism. The "Tourism and Folklore: Challenges and Opportunities" salon participants noted that the sharp decline in tourism during the first year of the pandemic caused substantial damage to communities that are economically dependent on tourism. At the same time, communities reclaimed local places that had been overwhelmed by tourism. There was deep reflection on the consequences of overtourism, which involves displacement of residents priced out of housing, excessive burdens on the physical infrastructure, and diminished local participation in cultural activities that become tourist destinations. Interest in regenerative and sustainable tourism increased. Nevertheless, as the pandemic eased, there has been a surge in "revenge tourism"—frequently undertaken through conventional means—which compensated for the years when traveling and gathering with others was restricted. Participants spoke of the need to re-envisage and reconfigure relationships of tourists to host communities toward reciprocity, meeting people and experiencing their culture as "visitors" rather than as "tourists."

Experiential and immersive tourism is a hot new trend. Tourists increasingly venture into back regions where life is lived day to day away from the tourist gaze. Their back region adventures can be highly intrusive and damaging to traditional expressions and places. Salon participants explored ways in which folklorists are especially well-equipped to create tourist experiences that are non-intrusive and contribute to the resilience of traditions. Supporting host communities, such approaches successfully translate and apply scholarship to lay audiences. The salons also addressed interpretive practices and modes of presentation frequently employed by public folklorists that are designed to contribute to the sustainability of traditions by supporting artists. They educate tourists about local traditions through self-guided tours on applications and audio recordings accessible on smart phones that present traditional places, cultural expressions, and events, which include the perspectives of local residents. Some are working in interpretive capacities in national and state parks. Folklorists can contribute to tourist brochures, which could serve as interpretive vehicles that define and project culturally appropriate images of the destination. To carry out these activities, folklorists need to develop productive relationships with public and private sector tourism entities that incorporate understanding of the shared and distinctive needs, interests, and perspectives of all stakeholders.

Heritage and Collective Environmental Stewardship

Folklorists have for decades wrestled with public environmental policies that refuse what Jeff Todd Titon calls "relational epistemologies and ontologies," discourses and related practices that hold together communities and their environments (Titon 2013; Hufford 2016). Until very recently, environmental issues were relegated to the margins of the US discipline of folklore. This began to change in the 1980s and 1990s, with the growth of public folklore within an expanding network of state, federal, and local agencies, institutions, and organizations. Engaging the environment as both a cultural medium for community life and an object of collective stewardship, US public folklore has inaugurated frameworks and programs that bridge the nature/culture divide characterizing both academic disciplines and government agencies. Concurrently, the integrative conceptualization of heritage that emerged encompassed both tangible and intangible heritage along with environmental rapport with cultural heritage (Hufford 1994b). What began in the 1980s as "cultural conservation" converged in the 1990s with tributaries from the civil rights and environmental movements, giving rise to "cultural sustainability" in the 2000s, as a subfield now allied with international heritage initiatives.

In his essay, Titon considers the success story of conservation policy shaped by the local knowledge of Maine lobstermen. Titon's contribution reminds us that, if dismantling racism requires environmental justice, environmental justice is not achievable apart from ecojustice, which is grounded in "an ecological rationality of reciprocity, responsibility, and interconnection" (Titon 2024:62). This logic is diametrically at odds with a natural capital framework; folklorists now find themselves grappling with these issues. Titon's essay forms a cautionary tale for folklorists advocating for cultural heritage as an "ecosystem service." In Titon's critical appraisal, the "ecosystem services"

framework—identifying services that nature provides to people—risks commodifying what ecojustice conceives of as the extension of community beyond the human. He argues that such a natural capital approach, manifesting the neoliberal economic logic of sustainability, is incompatible with the goals of ecojustice. Within the natural capital framework, we must ask whether heritage designation adds value to what has been historically devalued, or is it actually re-inscribing capitalist, colonialist relations within a new form of enclosure?

As the "Sustainabilities" salons demonstrate, the environmental context for public folklore continues to shift precipitously. Planetary crises, including global warming, species extinction, and forced migrations of climate refugees, impel new forms of collaboration across sectors and disciplines. International colleagues from multiple countries, associated with both public and academic institutions, shared their efforts to integrate localized knowledges with expert knowledges toward place-based environmental planning with perspectives from Alaska, Romania, Appalachia, India, Louisiana, and the Chesapeake Bay. Participants compared challenges to, and opportunities for, cultural sustainability represented through federal as well as international programs and policies, including the US Department of Agriculture, the European Union, and United Nation entities, including not only UNESCO and its ICH program, but also the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). There is a clear rationale for international collaboration among folklorists to address loss of land and place in a time of escalating climate crisis—a need that was not well-served by the United States' withdrawal from UNESCO in 2019.[4] Looking toward the need for public folklore and critical heritage work in the face of upcoming extensive climate-induced relocation, salon participants identified solid disciplinary and historical foundations on which to build, including experience with refugee, immigrant, and land-based communities, interdisciplinarity, and the capacity to bridge between local and expert knowledges. Like several other salons, both sustainability salons concluded that ethnographically informed facilitation of public dialogue is folklore's strong suit.

Collecting the Present in Anticipation of the Future

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's essay on anticipatory heritage calls for shifting the heritage lens from the construction of the past in the present toward a more prospective practice that she describes as "collecting the present" in anticipation of the future. Describing the significance of collecting for a future we may not live to witness, she argues that folklorists' unique positioning at the nexus of historical consciousness and heritage consciousness allows us to reconsider what we document—including practices in the present that would be meaningful to an imagined future even for those anticipating a future they will not live to see. In an examination of collecting the present—from the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 to the current COVID-19 pandemic—she notes that objects collected include not only traditional objects but objects newly fashioned out of a sense of urgency. Folklorists, long thought to be looking back, have moved well beyond "eleventh hour ethnography" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 2024:86) and are now intentionally imagining future legacies. Proceeding

from a sense of the fragility of the ephemeral, collecting the present initiates a bridge to be completed by future interlocutors. Kirshenblatt-Gimblett concludes with a call for "a critical heritage intervention" that, using the tools of ethnography and collecting, identifies the creativity and resilience of the present moment, while bearing in mind that heritage can be deployed in ways that are far from emancipatory (2024:91).

The "Anticipatory Heritage" salons took up this theme, reflecting critically on the politics, purposes, and likely futures of heritage-making. They explored the following questions: How are folklorists already working with communities on anticipatory heritage projects? How does engaging heritage prospectively actually shape the future? Memorialization has long been a primary focus of anticipatory heritage. Casting a critical eye, salon participants emphasized that this ideologically loaded concept can be utilized to harmful ends or for beneficent purposes that include cultural healing. Participants discussed approaches for harnessing heritage to re-animate and revitalize traditions, aiming for more just, humane, and community self-determined futures. They viewed repatriation as a major means for advancing decolonization, enabling greater ownership of heritage by historically oppressed cultural groups as they re-engage with treasured legacy materials. The issue of who gets to define heritage is highly salient for folklorists, who need to respect community cultural self-determination. They argued that folklorists should be more extensively trained in museum and archival practices, which would equip them to deal competently and appropriately with matters such as deaccessioning, acquisition, and repatriation, along with other skills required of heritage workers.

Like discussions across the salons, conversations about anticipatory heritage gleaned opportunities provided by the pandemic itself. How can the work of public folklorists pivot to collaborate with communities in pandemic-induced scenarios, compressing work, schooling, and day care within homes? Community-based documentation projects during the pandemic yielded a rich trove of emergent cultural practices and traditions adapted to the exigencies of the crisis. Black Lives Matter and other activist movements represent an especially significant focus of projects embodying social justice objectives. Re-animation through anticipatory heritage also entails selectively incorporating traditions in everyday life. Exploring the notion of "speculative heritage," the discussions reframe folklore's tools of documentation, archiving, and public programming as contributions to a collaborative process of imagining and facilitating possible futures.

Over the past 40 years, public folklorists have increasingly emphasized community cultural self-determination, anticipating with communities which practices in the present should be available to future stakeholders, and working together with them to assure that availability. The series of webinars and salons organized by the AFS Fellows in 2021 engaged colleagues from within AFS and well beyond to interrogate the promises and limitations of heritage theory and practice, with an eye on new horizons. As we resume professional lives and practice in person and in public, legacies of 2 years of pandemic-induced quarantine remind us that we can't go back completely, nor do we wish to. This special issue endeavors to offer a snapshot of a critically pivotal moment and its potentially transformative gifts.

Notes

1. See Atkinson (2006); Baron (2010, 2021); Baron and Spitzer ([1992] 2007b); Cadaval, Kim, and N'Diaye (2016); Feintuch (1988); Frandy and Cederström (2022); Hufford (1994a); and Kodish (2011).

2. See, for example, Bendix and Hafstein (2010); Harrison (2013); Lowenthal (2015); Smith (2006); Stefano and Davis (2017); and Tolla-Kelly, Waterton, and Watson (2017). There has been a vast amount of other relevant heritage scholarship published over the past quarter-century. An extensive bibliography of ICH appears in UNESCO's "Research References on the Implementation of the 2003 Convention" (UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, n.d.-b). They include many articles in academic journals such as the *International Journal of Heritage Studies, Annals of Tourism Research*, and *International Journal of Intangible Cultural Heritage*. The Association of Critical Heritage Studies, the largest organization of heritage scholars, produces biennial conferences of presentations of international scholars.

3. See Luise Rellensmann, Dreams Not Bricks: The Burra Charter and Australia's Pioneering Role in Preservation, *Uncube* [Blog comment], November 24, 2014, https://www.uncubemagazine.com/blog/14886293.

4. As this issue was about to go to press, the United States rejoined UNESCO. The ratification of the 2003 UNESCO ICH Convention would need to occur as an additional act.

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