

# EDITORIAL

While riding the municipal bus this past January in Remuera, a well-to-do neighbourhood in Auckland, New Zealand, I was surprised and dismayed to hear a group of children perhaps ten years old singing—to the tune of “Frère Jacques”—the refrain “I am boring, I am boring.” I can’t help but think this is the first generation to be convinced of its own elemental worthlessness before puberty. Lyrics of child’s songs and rhymes—because they express inner feelings of self-understanding, wished-for revenge, power, and so forth, provide a valuable insight into the translucent outer world of children. I felt sorry for these New Zealand kids, whose childhood blasé exposes such a strong sense of the betrayal of community and local pride which is a side effect of technological-media culture.

How sad it is that the strong folklore of children has been so undone by the suggestiveness of mass advertising and uniform transmittal of information. Surely childlore is one of the last traditions still serving in something like a traditional role, but it clearly lacks the strength of the inventiveness of self-assured children developing toward unique and approachable community guidelines.

This threatened body of childlore provides the focus for our lead article by ubiquitous *Bulletin* staffer Tony Montague. Although Tony did most of his research among English school children, his commentary is clearly indicative of the changing focus of

this folk art throughout the English-speaking world community. We can only hope that the ever-enduring nature of children will allow them to write off our adult hype and hoopla as fad and curse, and go on creating rhyme and song with more vitality, spunk and hope than the songs that so sadly expressed the boredom of schoolkids on the Remuera bus.

On another note—we at the *Bulletin* are grateful for messages of support that regularly cross our desks, and enlightened by constructive criticisms and suggestions, too. As we move past the middle of our third publishing year we are expecting some directional changes in the forthcoming fourth volume. Your messages of interest at this time will help us determine the important role the *Bulletin* will play in fostering interest in folk song singing and scholarship in years to come. If there is something you’d like to tell us—suggestions, comments, criticisms—please write to us, The Editors, *Canada Folk Bulletin*, 101-337 Carrall Street, Vancouver, B.C. V6B 2J4.

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