



CONDUCTING ARCHIVAL AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

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Archival Research



Archives:

Are Topical Collective Memory Repositories

Have a Mandate

Contain Primary Research Materials

Take Special Care to Protect and Preserve Holdings



Beaton Institute
Archives

The Beaton Institute is the official repository for historically significant records of Cape Breton University. Additionally, the Institute is a cultural heritage archive mandated to preserve the social, economic, political, and cultural history of Cape Breton Island.

Preparing for Your Visit to an Archive



Call the archive first.




Use the archive's online catalogue
for preliminary research.



Plan to spend the day writing
notes.

A MUNFLA Online Catalog Record

 Online Public Access Catalog

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The MUN Folklore and Language Archive

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Accession Number	91-146
Title	A study of Newfoundland fairy abduction narratives
Collector/Donor	Schwoe Efermann, Catherine Ann
Scope and Content	Folklore 6210/Herbert Halpert/Fall 1978
Subject	Beliefs and their practices (major subject) beliefs and practices fairies religion personal experience narratives ritual
Year	1991
Physical Description	manuscript (47 pages typed).

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At the Archive



Access Restrictions: Some archived materials might have access restrictions.



Copyright Restrictions: While an archive might have the right to use the materials in its holdings, we might not have that right.



Ethical Restrictions: Primary research materials are different from library materials because they reflect the lived experiences of their donors more intimately than polished texts do.

Citing Archival Sources

MUNFLA provides a citation guide to researchers. Other archives might do the same. Be sure to ask!

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND FOLKLORE AND LANGUAGE ARCHIVE BIBLIOGRAPHIC CITATION GUIDELINES

As a part of any form of academic research, all writers must properly document their sources. This means acknowledging the source for each piece of information by using a bibliography and/or works cited list, and citations for ideas and paraphrased material, as well as for direct quotations. Archival materials found in MUNFLA require specific reference information that is not always included in published resources such as books and journal articles. MUNFLA accession and shelflist numbers **must be included** in all references to material held by the Archive.

The Department of Folklore and the Archive follow Turabian bibliographic citation style. The examples listed below cover the most common forms using Turabian's reference-list format. For materials not covered below, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Fieldwork Sound Recordings:

Collector's name (surname first). Year of recording. *Description/title*. Medium (e.g. cassette, CD). MUNFLA Accession Number /Shelflist Number. Month & day of recording.

Noftall, Elizabeth. 1972. *Interview with Emile Benoit, Port au Port, NL*. Cassette. MUNFLA 78-256/C1884. August 14.

Fieldwork Visual Recordings:

Collector's name (surname first). Year of recording. *Description/title*. Medium (e.g. film, video, DVD). MUNFLA Accession Number/Shelflist Number. Month & day of recording.

Noftall, Elizabeth. 1997. *Interview with Emile Benoit, Port au Port, NL*. DVD-R. MUNFLA 98-256/V7884. August 14.

Commercial Sound Recordings in MUNFLA's Holdings:

Artist(s) name (surname first). Year of issue. *Title*. Medium (e.g. LP record, cassette, CD). Label Issue number. MUNFLA Accession Number/Shelflist Number.

Allison, Luther. 1997. *Reckless*. CD. Alligator AL76685. MUNFLA 79-000/R467da.

Covering Your Ethical Bases

How a Memorata Might Be Used in Fiction Writing

Utilizing Existing Memorates

Memorates are directly connected to the people who tell them, and I care very much about the dignity of those people. Note that I asked and obtained written permission from the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore Archive (the place where I found the above memorate), Katelyn Vardy (the person who collected the memorate), and Danny Butler (the person who told the memorate) before including it in this edition of the newsletter. Further, MUNFLA, Katelyn, and Danny all know exactly how I plan to use Danny's narrative, and they all have the right to retract their permission at any time. With this in mind, I do not recommend that you use existing memorates in your fiction writing unless you have undertaken similar, stringent measures. I would also remind you that memorates are often stigmatized, so be careful you aren't exposing living people to ridicule by fictionalizing their supernatural experience narratives.

Acknowledgments

This edition of Folklore & Fiction contains materials from the [Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive](#). The original collector of these materials was Katelyn Vardy. The original donor of these materials was Danny Butler. My thanks to them all for permitting me to use the materials here.

A List of Canadian Archives

Archives Canada
www.archivescanada.ca

Ethnographic Research



Ethnography:

Is the Study of People and Culture

Employs Thick Description

Depends upon Participant Observation and Ethnographic Interviews



My goal is only to provide a few pointers for conducting ethnographic interviews.

The Ethnographic Interview: Preliminaries



Think about why you're conducting the interview.



Decide what kind of interview you want to do.



Consider the person you're interviewing.

The Ethnographic Interview: Topics

Traditional Arts Indiana Topics List

- *Beginnings* – How did you get started doing X?
- *Community* – Who do you make X for? What is your audience?
- *Aesthetics*: What makes a good X? A bad X?
- *Process*: Tell me about your process for making X.
- *Traditionality*: How did you learn X, and from whom?
- *Creativity*: How have you changed X since you learned it?

Search YouTube for These Videos



Fieldwork Guide: Structuring interview questions



Fieldwork Guide: Getting interesting answers

The Ethnographic Interview: Informants

Before the Interview

Conduct a pre-interview with your informants whenever possible in order to set expectations. This might be done via email, by phone, or in person.

During the Interview



Avoid responding with verbal acknowledgement cues.



Avoid interrupting your informant.



Be comfortable with silences.



Ask your informants questions for which you already know the answers.



Ask informants to define esoteric terms and describe esoteric processes.

The Ethnographic Interview: Formats



FACE-TO-FACE
INTERVIEWS



QUESTIONNAIRES

The Ethnographic Interview: Locations



OUTDOOR LOCATIONS



INDOOR LOCATIONS

The Ethnographic Interview: Technical Considerations



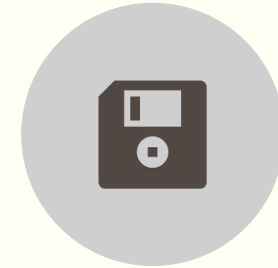
Use the best equipment.



Practice using your equipment.

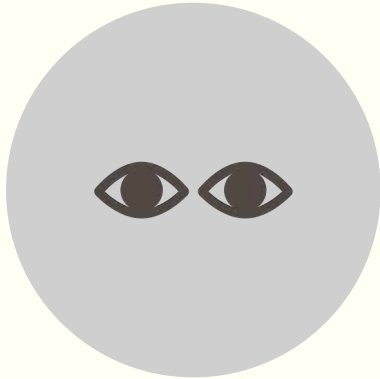


Bring extra chargers and batteries.



Always run a backup recorder.

The Ethnographic Interview: Ethical, Copyright, and Archival Considerations



Be transparent.



Ask your informants to sign an agreement.



You might use an archive's template to create this agreement.



QUESTIONS?



THE FOLKLORE & FICTION NEWSLETTER

www.csmaccath.com

