

21L.423J/21M.223J

Reading Questions: Session 1

Dundes, Thoms, and Muir

What are some examples of MIT folklore?

What does Willa Muir report as her observation of the relationship between class and singing games? How do you understand that relationship?

What seems to be the psychological function of singing games?

Why the refrain “on a cold and frosty morning”?

How can kids play these games day after day without getting bored?

Describe the language of these singing games.

Do boys play them?

How are singing games the carriers of tradition? Can you give an example?

Why is repetition and pattern important in oral tradition?

What struck you in what Muir says about riddles in oral tradition?

What is a ballad performance style?

Why did Margaret Laidlaw tell Sir Walter Scott that he had spoiled ballads?

Why are ballads too long and slow to find favor in the modern world?