

in the Wind

Seattle Storytellers' Guild • Autumn 1995 • Vol. XVIII, Number 4

Am I Repeating Myself?

by Martha J. Eshelman-Smith

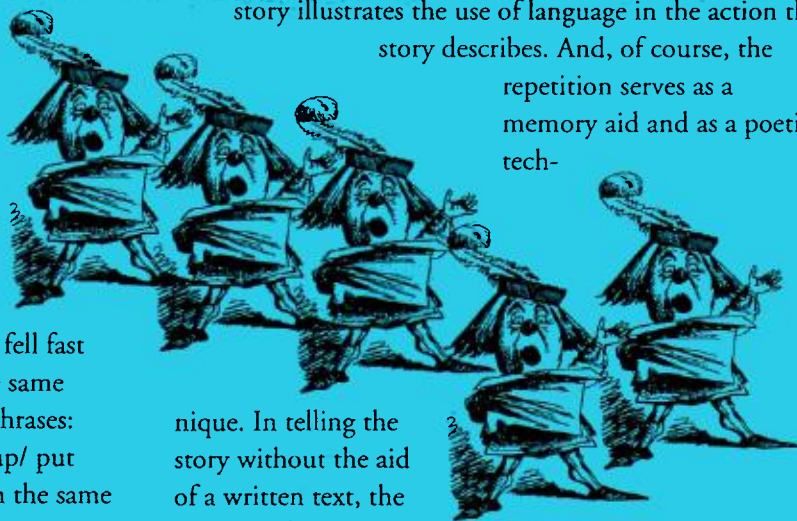
I believe that my first article for *In the Wind* was on the topic of repetition. As my grandchildren grow old enough to listen to and to tell stories, the topic again comes to mind. A four-year-old child is reported in Sutton-Smith's *The Folkstories of Children* as telling "Snow White" as: "and they danced for a year or so / and they danced / and they danced/ and then they went to bed / and they fell fast asleep / and they lived happily ever after." The same child also used repetition in creating parallel phrases: "and then he went home / and then they got up/ put their clothes on / put their shoes on." In much the same way that a child learning to put words into sentences sometimes makes evident how sentences are structured, this child learning to put sentences into stories makes evident some of the facets of how stories are structured.

The story of Aqhat, circa 1600 B.C. as translated by Coogan in *Stories from Ancient Canaan* includes: "One day had ended, and on the second / Danel made an offering to the gods, / an offering for the gods to eat, / and offering for the holy ones to drink. / Three days had

ended, and on the fourth," Danel made an offering..." The repetition serves several purposes. It reflects the passage of time with both the explicit reference to time but also with the repetitive (cyclic) action which reflects in words the "sameness" of each day—the sun rises, the sun sets. In the opening passage quoted above, Danel is performing a ritual. Ritual language is by nature repetitive either within the ritual itself or within multiple

performances of the ritual. The language of the story illustrates the use of language in the action the story describes. And, of course, the

repetition serves as a memory aid and as a poetic tech-



nique. In telling the story without the aid of a written text, the story itself is shaped to be easily remembered, perhaps even improvised, and is not dependent upon its look on the printed page as is, for example, the poetry of e.e. cummings.

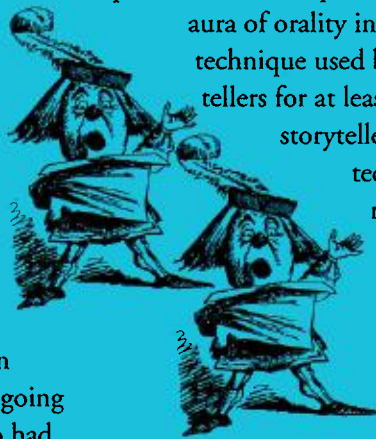
"How Toothache Came into the World" (Gaster's *The Oldest Stories in the World*) exhibits similar technique: "'What will you give me to eat?' he cried, / and

(continued inside)

Repeating...(continued from pg. 1)

what will you give me to drink?'/ 'I will give you ripe figs,' said the god of justice,/'and I will give you apricots.'/ 'What good are ripe figs?' cried the worm./ 'And what use are apricots?'" Here the use of repetition emphasizes the story line. In parallel phrases, worm asks for the two necessities of life—food and drink. The response explicitly gives him both in the form of juicy fruits. The worm refuses both. There is no misunderstanding, no ambiguity. The exchange clearly establishes the worm as the bad one, an appropriate image for the worm which chooses to cause toothaches rather than eat apricots and figs, an appropriate image for the adversary that the one afflicted by toothaches tries to eradicate.

James Thurber's "The Unicorn in the Garden" (from *Fables for Our Times*) uses repetition masterfully: "You are a booby,' she said, ' and I am going to have you put in the booby-hatch.' The man, who had never liked the words 'booby' and 'booby-hatch;..." The use of "booby" four times in two sentences enhances the



humorous tone of the story which is otherwise written in "literary" vocabulary. The contrast between the wife's use of the term and the man's dislike of the word reinforces the contrasting personalities that Thurber has developed. Thurber also uses parallel phrases: "She telephoned the police and she telephoned a psychiatrist;" To create an aura of orality in his tale, Thurber uses the same technique used by a modern child and by storytellers for at least three and a half millennia. As a storyteller, I take that to mean the technique works—that repetition is not redundancy or a cute anachronism but rather an essential tool in the skills of a teller.

The Tacoma Historical Society

Storytelling Grant for Tacoma

Wanted: The Tacoma Historical Society seeks a storyteller able to create and tell original stories based on historic facts and events from Tacoma's history.

Bring Tacoma's history alive!

The Tacoma Historical Society proposes a \$1,000 grant to a storyteller able to research factual historic events in Tacoma's past and create stories that enliven our history, engage our young people and help our community re-imagine itself.

Create one or more stories based on Tacoma's history, not to exceed 15 minutes. Present your program at the Society's monthly meeting held Monday evening, January 8, 1996, at the Downtown Branch of the Tacoma Public Library. A panel of judges that includes a

Tacoma historian, teacher and storyteller will select the winner.

Winner will have three (3) months to prepare a 40-minute program of Tacoma Historical Tales to be presented 10 times during the Spring of 1996. The performances will be given to third grade history classes in Tacoma grammar schools and at local retirement homes. One performance will be videotaped for the THS library; a copy of the video will be given to the Storyteller.

Interested storytellers should call THS at (206) 572-2210 or write *c/o* Storytelling, The Tacoma Historical Society, P.O. Box 1865, Tacoma, WA 98401. You must contact us to reserve your place at the January 8th "Tacoma HiSTORY Meeting."

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Tellabration! '95 on November 18

Tellabration! '95, The Night of Storytelling, is an evening of storytelling performances held in communities across the United States, Canada and Europe. The Seattle Storytellers' Guild is pleased to participate in this event with stories from six fine local tellers. Avis Jobrack, Kathi Lightstone, George Neiswanger, Ken Pleasant, Sally Porter-Smith and Cherie Trebon will take the stage on November 18 in the Shaefer Auditorium at Seattle University.

Tellabration, created in 1987, is an exciting way to spread the word about storytelling so that people, especially adults, can experience its joys, become more aware of its importance and choose to support it. Bring along a friend who is new to storytelling and introduce them to this venerable art form.

The Shaefer Auditorium is in the Lemieux Library on the campus of Seattle University which is located on First Hill at the corner of Broadway and James streets. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Stories begin at 7 p.m. Admission is a reasonable \$5 per person.

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Help Wanted



by Volunteer Coordinator Avis Jobrack

Last summer, while visiting my parents in Florida (take my advice, never go to Florida in the summer, especially if you plan to visit the "is it hot enough for you dear?" Jobracks) I came across an old photo. There I am, age 3, in my best dress, cozily chatting away on my little toy phone. Well, it looks like the more things change, the more they stay the same. My phone is slightly more high-tech these days, but nothing would delight me more than to have a cozy phone chat with you, dear SSG member, about your helping out during "Tellabration!"—our big Fall storytelling event (see above article).

There are several volunteer opportunities, none of which will interfere with your attendance and enjoyment of the program. How about helping out with:

- Admissions: arrive by 6:30. Take money. Make change. (2 people)

- Resource Table: Arrive by 6:30 and/or work during intermission. Sell our wonderful SSG shirts. Take money. Make change. (2 people)

- Usher: Arrive by 6:30. Seating will be limited, so make sure those empty spaces get filled. (1 person)

- Refreshments: Intermission only. Keep those drinks and cookies coming (2-3 people)

Interested? Call me, Avis Jobrack, at home (206) 863-5025, or drop me a line at P.O. Box 1294, Sumner, WA 98390.

Coming attractions: The Seattle Storytellers' Guild Annual Storytelling Festival has been moved to this Spring. We'll be looking for lots of volunteers by then. My little phone (and its friendly answering machine) eagerly awaits your call...

Especially for Members:

Second Mondays on the Hill

Fall is a season rich in holidays that bring many storytelling opportunities and the Seattle Storytellers' Guild is delighted to offer members and friends a chance to enjoy those opportunities on each second Monday of October, November and December at the New City Theater on Capitol Hill.

Fall '95 Second Monday Tellers

October 9

Bruce Wolcott and Tom Galt

Bruce's telling of "Two White Horses" touches your heart and chills your bones all at once. Bruce, who comes to storytelling via improvisational theater, brings quiet drama to this eerie tale. He is a two-time winner of the Folklife "Liars Contest."

Tom Galt, blessed with a near photographic memory that keeps hundreds of stories in his head, promises to tickle your funny bone with one or two of his favorites. It's often said that Tom becomes the story he tells right down to the appropriate regional accent.

November 13

Ken Pleasant

"The Storytelling Hobo," Ken Pleasant hails from Texas by way of Sedro-Woolley. A lifelong fascination with hobo life as well as a family tradition of storytelling have given Ken a rich trove of tales to share. He has told professionally for nine years and often includes songs and guitar music in his performance.

December 11

Dawn Kuhlman and Camille Wooden Martha Eshelman-Smith

A medley of holiday tales are promised by these three tellers. Dawn, like many tellers, grew up with storytelling. Her father's wonderful stories were her inspiration. She is a sixth grade teacher whose students thrive on her ability to spin a tale. Dawn and Camille often perform in tandem as well as individually. Camille

is the winner of the "Liars Contest" at the 1995 Folklife Festival. Martha Eshelman-Smith, a frequently published poet and self-confessed "computer nerd," specializes in animal tales. Martha is long-time Guild member who is currently intrigued with medieval folklore.

Second Monday storytelling evenings are held at the New City Theater, 1634 11th Ave. on Capitol Hill. Free parking available. Stories begin at 7 p.m. An open microphone is available for unscheduled tellers after the featured performance. If you would like to tell an "open mike" story, please give the emcee your name when you arrive at the theater.

SSG members: \$4

Non-members: \$6

Intermediate Storytelling Class

This class builds on the storytelling skills you already have. We'll focus on:

- selecting stories for a 15-50 minute program
- capitalizing on audience dynamics
- vocal techniques and gestures
- recovering from a goof
- finding more opportunities to tell
- being savvy with sponsors
- getting support to blossom as a teller.

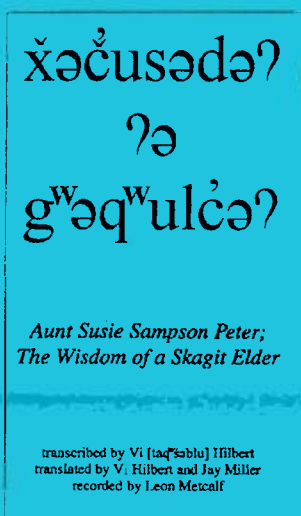
The instructor, Cynthia Orr, was a featured teller at NAAPS and other storytelling festivals. She appeared on national television, NPR, and received grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. She performed and taught in 30 states during 10 years of full-time telling.

The class will be held on four Wednesday evenings, October 4-25, from 7-9 p.m., in West Seattle. The fee is \$65. Please call Cynthia at 938-1916 to register or for more information.



Sources: About Stories and the Folks Who Tell Them

by Margaret Read MacDonald, King County Library System



Vi Hilbert's massive transcription/translation project appears in print at last. We are able to hear her Aunt Susie's own words as she shares histories, memories and stories. Susie Sampson Peter was born in 1863. These words were taped in the 1950s by Leon Metcalf and through the untiring efforts of Vi Hilbert have now been transcribed from the Lushootseed tapes and translated into English so that we all may hear the words of her Aunt Susie. And these are words that we all will want to hear.

Through Aunt Susie's eyes we see her family and people going about their lives, living on the land in the Skagit area. Then the first white men begin to arrive. It is mind wrenching to realize that within the lifetime of this woman, who died in 1961, the entire Western Washington corridor was entered, built over and in many places cemented over by an outside tribe.

I suggest we all read this book and think about it.

The Mountaineers

Volunteers for Conservation

Free Workshops

Three years ago, The Mountaineers began an exciting conservation storytelling program for elementary and middle school children in Puget Sound. Conservation for Kids delivers an interactive dose of environmental education in a fun and memorable form. Storytellers use a techniques called "living history presentation," assuming the role of an interesting character whose life story illustrates the importance of conserving our valuable natural resources.

Loren Foss, Conservation Education Coordinator of The Mountaineers, reaches about 3,500 young people each year with his characters "Archie" and "Old John." Our goal is to greatly increase this coverage of students and other audiences—especially in diverse communities and settings—by actively recruiting and training conservation storytellers. With 10 to 20 additional conservation storytellers, we could reach a significant percentage of Puget Sound youth.

Volunteers will develop their own unique characters and presentation styles, using living history presentations or more classical storytelling techniques. Volunteers will also be encouraged to take their skills back to the communities where they live, presenting for schools, libraries, park programs, nursing homes or hospitals.



The Mountaineers invites members of the community to attend an introductory workshop on Monday, October 2, from 7 to 9 p.m. at The Mountaineers building, 300 Third Avenue West, Seattle. For more information, please contact Loren Foss or Matt Golec at 284-6310.

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September



28 Story 'N Snack potluck dessert and story swap, autumn theme. Call Guild for info: 621-8646.

30 9-10 a.m., Benefit Storytelling Concert in conjunction with Success Program 8K Run/4K Walk. Bellevue Park just south of Bellevue Square. Call 718-2665 for more info.

30 11-11:30 a.m., Cheri Trebon, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

October



5 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

7 11-11:30 a.m., Susy Irwin, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

9 7 p.m., Bruce Wolcott & Tom Galt, Second Mondays on the Hill, New City Theater, 1634 11th Ave., Capitol Hill.

12 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

14 10:30 a.m., Ms. Frizzle visits: hurricane stories, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

14 11-11:30 a.m., Kathy Currie, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

19 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

21 11-11:30 a.m., Cindy Easterton, Storytelling at

Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

26 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

26 Story 'N Snack potluck dessert and story swap, Halloween tales. Call Guild for info: 621-8646.

28 10:30 a.m., Margaret Read Macdonald, Storytelling, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

28 11-11:30 a.m., Dawn Kuhlman & Camille Wooden, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

29 1:30 p.m. Cheri Trebon, Story Corner, Bellevue Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. N.E., Bellevue, 450-1775.

November



2 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

4 11-11:30 a.m., Kathi Lightsone-Matanovic, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

9 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson, Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

11 11-11:30 a.m., Teller t.b.a., Storytelling at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

11 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Featherfest: A Day for Families, Auditorium, Art Studio, Special Exhibition Gallery, Downtown.

C ❖ A ❖ L ❖ E ❖ N ❖ D ❖ A ❖ R

13 7 p.m., Ken Pleasant, "The Storytelling Hobo,"
Second Mondays on the Hill, New City Theater,
1634 11th Ave., Capitol Hill.

16 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

18 11-11:30 a.m., Nancy Stewart, Storytelling at
Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island.
Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

18 7 p.m. Tellabration! '95, The Night of
Storytelling, Shaefer Auditorium, Lemieux Library
on Seattle University Campus, Broadway and James
Streets. Admission \$5.

19 1:30 p.m. Teller t.b.a., Story Corner, Bellevue
Regional Library, 1111 110th Ave. N.E., Bellevue,
450-1775.

30 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

30 Story 'N Snack potluck dessert and story swap,
Holiday tales. Call Guild for info: 621-8646.

December



2 11-11:30 a.m., Pat Peterson, Storytelling at Island
Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free,
recommended for children age 3+.

7 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

9 11-11:30 a.m., Rosemary Adamski, Storytelling
at Island Books, 3014 78th Ave., Mercer Island.
Sessions free, recommended for children age 3+.

11 7 p.m., Dawn Kuhlman & Camille Wooden,
Martha Eshelman-Smith, Second Mondays on the

Hill, New City Theater, 1634 11th Ave., Capitol Hill.

14 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

16 11-11:30 a.m., Ted Rand, Signing The Night
Before Christmas, Storytelling at Island Books, 3014
78th Ave., Mercer Island. Sessions free, recommended
for children age 3+.

21 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.

28 11:30 a.m., Storytelling with Deborah Hudson,
Puss 'N Books, 15788 Redmond Way, Redmond.



Family Programs

Featherfest:

A Day for Families

Perch at the museum for a day of discovery, inspired
by the remarkable birds of John James Audubon. Wood-
land Park zookeeper Eric Kowalczyk speaks about local
birds; clarinetist Laura DeLuca and flutist Paul Taub
perform music inspired by birdsong; and storyteller Naomi
Baltuck explains "Why Buzzard is Bald." Children, parents
and friends are also invited to try out the new *Eye-Spy Field
Guide* and make a bird ornament to take home. And don't
miss the opportunity to meet a personality from Kidstar
Radio, broadcasting live from Featherfest! November 11,
11 a.m. - 4 p.m., Auditorium, Art Studio, Special Exhibi-
tion Gallery, Downtown.

Gene Friese Scholarship

Information about this scholarship program
will be in the next issue of *In The Wind*.

Seattle Storytellers' Guild
621-8646

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Volunteer Coordinator: Avis Jobrack (206/863-5025)

In the Wind is the newsletter of the Seattle Storytellers' Guild, a non-profit organization, and is published quarterly. Membership in the Guild includes a year's subscription. Please check the expiration date on your label. Deadline for the winter issue is December 1, 1995.

Newsletter design by Nancy Blanton, 937-1343

Membership Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____

Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____

Date: _____

- New Renewal
- Individual, \$15
- Family, \$20
- Institutional, \$30
- Donor, \$35
- Lifetime, \$150
- Muse, over \$150
- I am interested in volunteering. Please call me to discuss how I may help.
- Please include my name on mailing list for related events.

Mail to: Seattle Storytellers' Guild, P.O. Box 45532, Seattle, WA 98145-0532.

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