

Narrative Culture

Since 2014, the journal “Narrative Culture”, edited by Ulrich Marzolph and Regina Bendix, is one of the official journals of the ISFNR. “Narrative Culture” covers the breadth of narrative expression across time and space relying on interdisciplinary expertise grounded in the tradition of historical and comparative folk narrative research.

“Narrative Culture” is published twice a year by Wayne State University <https://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/journals/detail/narrative-culture>. Specific essays can be purchased at <https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/narrative/>. Full members of the ISFNR are entitled to a discount. For details please contact Julie Warheit of Journal Marketing & Sales julie.warheit@wayne.edu.

As a complimentary service to the members of the ISFNR, the publishers have agreed to offer one essay per year for free download.

New issues of “Narrative Culture” will be advertised on this website at regular intervals.

The Journal’s Mission Statement

The journal “Narrative Culture” claims traditional narrative as a broad and pervasive, in fact an essential constituent of human practice, warranting a holistic perspective to grasp its place comparatively across time and space. Traditional narrative, as the editors see it, comprises themes and motifs that rely on a long, and sometimes international tradition, as well as traditional modes of narration in oral and written practice giving rise to ever new narrative shapes and contents. By widening the scope of “narrative” to “narrative culture”, the journal embraces the transmedial representation and transmission of traditional narratives in numerous forms of cultural expression. In other words, “narrative culture” explores cultural expression as outlined and defined by the impact of (traditional) narratives. Inviting contributions that document, discuss and theorize the impact of traditional narratives in various forms of cultural expression, the journal opens an interdisciplinary platform that integrates approaches spread across numerous disciplines. In addition to folklore, the concept of “Narrative Culture” is particularly relevant for ethnographic and historical research, but it also addresses questions relevant for psychology, communications, media and performance studies. The denomination of narrative culture thus aims to be both exclusive as a demarcation against the numerous approaches (in various journals and scientific societies) focusing primarily on narration in literature as well as inclusive in terms of wide theoretical and methodological approaches exploring the range and impact of traditional narratives and narration. In terms of genres, the field thus outlined is defined by a large variety of forms, including not only oral and written texts, but also popular narratives in images, three-dimensional art, customs, rituals, drama, dance, music, film and so forth. Aspects of performance and its context are key to understanding the impact of tradition in various modes of narration. Acknowledging the collective human element as present in the constitution of narration, in the work of narrators (performers, artists, etc.) and audience alike, sheds new meaning to the adaptation of vernacular or folk narrative in the modern world.

The journal welcomes contributions from researchers in all related disciplines. It is one of the official journals of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research and seeks to offer a platform and readership for scholars within and beyond the Society. Linking the journal to the

ISFNR acknowledges the long historical trajectory of research committed to narrative culture(s) and inspires future approaches to the role and impact of narrative culture in historical and contemporary societies. Folk narrative research originally focussed on a limited number of traditional genres such as myths, religious and historical legends, folktales and fairy tales, or jokes and anecdotes as represented in oral tradition and their written expression in literature. It aimed at documenting, preserving, and studying humanity's narrative heritage. Today, vernacular or folk narrative research also deals with narrative material as a source of inspiration for literature and the arts. With the unfolding of ever new media of communication, from film, radio and television to the internet as platforms for the propagation and dissemination of all kinds of narratives, linkages to long-standing traditions, be it in form of content or mode of narration, are worthy of exploration, much as are seemingly new genres and topoi. In other words, the Society's general scope as documented by the wide range of contributions presented at its conferences has over the past decades grown beyond its original aims, and the journal intends to reflect this growth as well as encourage new and innovative research beyond the originally defined frame. The field of folk narrative research has properly grown into a research endeavour addressing "narrative culture" as an overarching human phenomenon across all channels of communication. Traditional narrative provides a nexus where literary, anthropological, historical, and communications perspectives fruitfully intersect. Simultaneously, narrative culture is an ideal key concept for globally comparative perspectives of human sensibility.

The current state of the field is living proof of its global relevance. Human communication strives toward narratives. These narratives are elaborated in a multitude of performative keys, enacted and disseminated in all possible media, and evaluated by audiences for the competence of their execution. Narrative research thus studies a key component of human existence. The vast majority of approaches to narrative research or “narratology” focuses on modes of narration in literature (and related fields), thus studying an expression of elite culture in contrast to the “traditional” tales constituting the “raw material” for folk narrative research. Today, students of narrative culture face a tremendous responsibility, as established research methods are challenged and transformed in the same way as old tales are adapted to address new problems and situations. The journal “Narrative Culture” thus offers a platform within which such transformations are uncovered and where new and synergetic approaches are tried out. The journal is particularly keen to bring scholars from different scholarly traditions worldwide into conversations with one another. It will thus recognize the opportunities lodged not only in interdisciplinary but also in globally comparative approaches to narrative culture.

Manuscript Submission Guidelines

Submissions of 5,000–7,500 words should be sent for consideration as an e-mail attachment in MS Word to the editors (umarzol@gwdg.de and rbendix@gwdg.de). Submissions should be accompanied by a separate file that includes the title of the manuscript and a 100-word abstract.

Only original articles that are not simultaneously under consideration by another journal will be considered. Submissions should not have been previously published in any language unless negotiated with the editors in advance. Unrevised student essays or theses cannot be considered. Send queries to the editors at umarzol@gwdg.de and rbendix@gwdg.de.

Style

Submissions must be prepared according to the current edition of the *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* and must use parenthetical documentation with a list of works cited. They must be double-spaced, including all quotations, endnotes, and the list of works cited. Submissions should be prepared for anonymous review (i.e., without any reference to the author’s identity).

Electronic Submission

Authors whose work is ultimately accepted for publication must submit the following three items prepared on a common word-processing program, preferably MS Word, or as an RTF file:

a copy of the final manuscript (5,000-7,500 words);

a 100-word abstract; and

a brief biographical note (50 words)

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