

9-25-2018

From the Editors

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Recommended Citation

Bacchilega, Cristina and Duggan, Anne E.. "From the Editors." *Marvels & Tales* 32.1 (2018). Web.
<<https://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/marvels/vol32/iss1/1>>.

FROM THE EDITORS

Subversive, deceptive, wily, and comical, the trickster spans national traditions, genres, and historical periods. Often represented as a deity, animal, or human, between upper and lower worlds, the trickster functions as the creator and destroyer of worlds, embodies the sacred and the profane, and brings together the scatological and the spiritual. In other tales, the trickster is a lowly and seemingly unpromising hero or a fool whose antics disrupt the social order only temporarily. This issue of *Marvels & Tales* explores the various dimensions of the trickster from various traditions. Essays move from India and Afghanistan to Africa and the Caribbean, from oral folklore to the post-cyberpunk novel, and they include both male and female tricksters. And, while it does not address the appropriateness of the “trickster” nomenclature, a topic of discussion in Indigenous studies, this special issue of *Marvels & Tales* raises questions of genre, gender, and performance especially in relation to the ethics of collecting and representing trickster tales. Together these essays foreground the complex nature and malleability of the trickster character that allow for the figure’s deployment as an oppositional figure in so many different contexts, whether that of contesting the norms of one’s own society, as in the case of the Indian trickster Gorakhnath; or that of challenging colonial legacies, as in the case of Anansi as he migrates from West Africa to the Caribbean. This issue also includes the first part of a translation of Antoine Galland’s journal, which sheds light on the “orphan tales” of the *Arabian Nights*—itself a source of numerous female and male trickster tales—and recognizes the talents and authorship of the Syrian storyteller, Hannā Diyāb. Finally, the issue closes with a new tale that plays on the clever and subversive nature of the trickster.

Please note that as of 2018 the journal is adopting the 8th edition of the *MLA Style Manual*.

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