Recent Publications

Games, Rhymes, and Wordplay of London Children

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- Makes available a unique and extensive fieldwork project conducted with London school children between 1962 and 1984
- Presents a detailed snapshot of changes in the traditions and language of young people through an overview of traditional play and lore, illustrating development over a period of some twenty years
- Provides a valuable new resource on childlore and points to directions for further research, exploration and analysis of the data
- Offers a representative range of material from a specific age-group to allow for exploration of factors such as geographical spread, broad social groupings and the gender of individual contributors
- Contextualises the data within a range of existing studies in Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the English-speaking world

This book presents a unique annotated collection of some 2000 playground games, rhymes, and wordplay of London children. It charts continuity and development in childlore at a time of major social and cultural change and offers a detailed snapshot of changes in the traditions and language of young people. Topics include: starting a game; counting-out rhymes; games (without songs); singing and chanting games; clapping, skipping, and ball bouncing games; school rhymes and parodies; teasing and taunting; traditional belief and practice; traditional wordplay; and a concluding miscellany. Recorded mainly in the 1980s by primary schoolteacher Nigel Kelsey, transcribed verbatim from the children’s own words, and accompanied by extensive commentaries and annotation, the book sets a wealth of new information in the wider historical and contemporary context of existing studies in Britain, Ireland, and other parts of the English-speaking world. This valuable new resource will open new avenues for research and be of particular interest to folklorists and linguists, as well as to those working across the full spectrum of social, cultural, and educational studies.