

Sonny's Dream:

Essays on Newfoundland Folklore and Popular Culture

By Peter Narváez

With an Introduction by Neil V. Rosenberg

Sonny's Dream: Newfoundland Folklore and Popular Culture presents fifteen essays written by musician, folklorist, popular studies scholar, ethnomusicologist and archivist Peter Narváez. Peter taught for more than three decades at Memorial University before retiring as Professor of Folklore and Music in 2005. Having immersed himself in the study of contemporary Newfoundland soon after his arrival in the province, he wrote these essays between 1977 and 2010. As Honorary Research Professor in post-retirement, Narváez updated the essays before his death in 2011, arranging them to highlight contrasting narratives of tradition and change in Britain's oldest colony and Canada's newest province. Offering revealing insights into familiar local traditions like berry-picking, well-known figures like Joseph R. Smallwood, and influential musicians like Ron Hynes and Great Big Sea, the essays demonstrate how folk and popular culture deals with issues of political and industrial change and crisis, shedding light on the interplay between individual and communal, rural and urban, old and new, local and global in the everyday lives of Newfoundlanders.

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