



jock hatfield

a typewriter warmed in hell

When a book proves interesting or original it is comforting to know that there is always an English department close by to hit the book over the head and turn it into a classic. No one can kill an idea faster than a literature teacher using heavy plot analysis and a course guide. It's relieving to classify a book as good, to put it in a good books collection and forget it forever.

But there is a book the literature

department has overlooked, and we better get to work on it quick before it gets loose. It is called *Pissing in the Snow*.

Pissing in the Snow is a collection of stories told by Ozark Mountain residents of Arkansas in the days before the English language was run over by the 20th century.

These Ozark Mountain residents know the importance of originality, even if they are preoccupied with tools and twitchets.

The Ozark story tellers aren't afraid of an analogy. A man, for example, is known as being so stupid "he couldn't piss from a boot with instructions printed on the heel." Now that's literature.

Analogies grow on Ozark tales like mushrooms on a manure pile. A couple doesn't just lie on the ground, they roll around like "two minks in rutting season." When it comes to lucidity the Ozarks have it all over modern writers.

And they know how to tell a story, too. Here is a paragraph from one called "A Long Time Back."

"One time there was two old men got to arguing about how far back they could remember. Both of 'em knowed what happened when they was six months old, also things that took place when they was three months old. Them fellows remembered cutting their baby teeth, and even the first time they ever tasted milk. It wasn't no trouble to recollect their own afterbirth looked like neither when they got going good."

"Finally one fellow says that several weeks before he was born his mother was setting out cabbage plants, and she had to straddle the row. 'Just for a joke,' he says, 'I used to reach out and pull up them plants faster than Maw could set 'em. I was a mean little devil in them days.' Another story, "Fireworks Under the Bed," tells of a woman who was going to get married:

"The man thought she was a pure virgin, but the truth is that she wasn't nothing of the kind. The women got a little tin snapper from a granny woman and was told to hold it in her hand the first night in bed. When he hears that click, explained the granny woman, he'll think it is you maidenhead a-popping."

"The contraption might have

been all right, only there was another girl found out about the snapper, and she put one of these giant power-caps inside of it, just to make trouble. When the fresh-married couple got in the bed the bride gave a yell just like the granny woman told her. But when she pushed the top of the snapper it went off loud as a gun, and like to have blown them both clear out of the bed. The whole place was full of smoke, with everyone yelling at the top of their voices with hell to pay generally."

Thoreau, Emerson and other diseases could have learned a lot from lively writing like this. And this is only the beginning. There are classics such as "Betsy and the Moleskin," "She didn't like Molasses," "Why God made Stickers," "Let's trade Twitchets" and "He done it with a Bucket."

Lest a literature department think bludgeoning *Pissing in the Snow* to death too hard a task, the editors of the book have already started the work. At the end of the chapter they classify the story by type and motif according to Aarne Thompson's type index. "Betsy and the Moleskin," for example "suggests a reversal of the motif of the "vagina dentata" Thompson's Motif-index (K1222) in which the man is tricked into believing the girl's vagina is toothed."

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UO Students \$4 General Public \$6
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Guadalajara study open

The International Student Service will provide information on studies at the University of Guadalajara at a table in Friendly Hall today.

At 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. the service will show slides of the Mexican university while former students talk about their studies south of the border.

Application for the program are due October 31. Minimum requirements are 24 credit hours of Spanish and sophomore standing.

Cost for the program is approximately \$1,595 for resident undergraduates and \$1,873 for a resident graduate. Fees include tuition and fees, room and board and travel.

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