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“Jones makes the everyday meaningful and alive to the reader. The book is personal and it is academic; it is easy to read, yet scholarly and rich in its insights.” —Journal of American Folklore

“In conclusion, it seems to me that as significant as objects, artifacts and things are, they should not be elevated to supremacy over the people who made and used them. If the tangible products of human imagination become a center of attention, and the ideas, feelings, needs and desires manifested by them are ignored, then both appreciation and understanding of those very artifacts are, ironically diminished. Therefore, material culture studies and folk art research might achieve their purposes most fully when the makers and users as well as the processes of conceptualization, implementation, and utilization—rather than the artifacts per se—are the objects of inquiry.”

—Michael Owen Jones, from the epilogue