Reading women's home and garden lives: a folkloristic examination of English gardening books of Marion Cran
Abstract

Building on scholarship from folklore and literature, everyday autobiography, women's traditional culture, and women's garden history, this thesis examines how Marion Cran documented home and garden experiences in Surrey and Kent through a series of gardening books she wrote between 1913 and 1941. — While providing useful information on plants and gardening practices, Cran's writing was fragmented and tangential: her books were filled with planting references suffused with culinary tips and recipes and traditional lore that evoked meaning and "encoded memories" (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1989). Although Cran was fascinated by garden styles indicative of the period, such as the English cottage garden, she also valued individuality in garden making, and implored her readers to create gardens that fulfilled their own expectations. — In her everyday autobiographies, Cran revealed her innermost thoughts based on her own experiences and what she learned through her observations of and interactions with fellow gardeners and homemakers. Cran inspired a predominantly female audience to create and maintain homes and gardens that benefited their own lives as well as those of their families and members of their communities. In direct correlation, women corresponded with Cran, confiding to her their own home and garden experiences whether they lived in England or South Africa. While exploring Cran's appeal to women readers, this thesis focuses on several themes: community and fellowship in gardening practices, implicit coding, female performativity, and women's sense of empowerment through creating a home and garden. — This thesis examines not only how Cran and her books inspired gardeners and homemakers' lives during the interwar period, but also, it recognizes her relevance to contemporary readers and present-day gardeners. Not unlike many gardeners today, Cran was committed to natural gardening practices and growing her own produce. Cran can be found not only between the pages of her books, but through the existence of her former home and garden, "Coggers," in Kent. By preserving Coggers and welcoming visitors, the current residents have fostered a growing community of readers and gardeners whose enthusiasm in Cran and her writings will continue her legacy for future generations. Marion Cran and her garden literature offer folklorists an alternative resource through which to understand and appreciate how women expressed themselves creatively through common, everyday tasks in homes and gardens of the early twentieth century.

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developed a farmhouse vernacular where the formally designed architectural gardens were planted with informality. Palladian Bridge at Stowe (1730-38). Since the garden was divided into definite spaces, each space was planted with many distinct plants to form different pictures month by month. Reading can open your mind to brilliant new worlds and take you to a new level of English language learning. It may feel like a slow process, but it is effective. Adopting English books as learning tools can help you reach English fluency faster than ever before. Take a trip to your local library and see what a difference a few good books can make! The Benefits of Reading English Books. He lives a very safe life with a lot of order and rules. There are many rules and everyone follows them. The citizens' lives are planned for them and they don’t often make a decision by themselves. Strange things happen and the older women turn into supernatural (not from Earth) beings. They transport the kids to the universe by the “tesseract.” They stop and visit different planets on the way.