

Syllabus

English 577.01: Folklore and Gender Politics

Professor Amy Shuman

Office: 566 Denney Hall; telephone: 292-6555

Office hours: Tues. and Thurs. 10:30-11:30

Requirements: term paper, comments on readings, group report on basic concepts, contribution to class bibliography

Texts: Susan Hollis, Linda Pershing, and M. Jane Young, Eds. Feminist Theory and the Study of Folklore. University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Joan Radner, Ed. Feminist Messages: Coding in Women's Folk Culture. University of Illinois Press, 1993.

Special Issue of New York Folklore on Gay and Lesbian folklore

Readings

Week One (Jan 3 and 5): The concept of tradition; traditional folklore; traditional women; contemporary interpretations

Read: Saltzman, Turner and Seriff, Yocum, Ice, and Sawin in FT

Week Two (Jan 10 and 12): Tradition continued: Read Hollis, Young, Mark, and Lawless in FT;
Read Radner and Lanser and Lanser in FM

Week Three (Jan 17 and 19): Coding between Women: Read Stewart, Langlois, Pershing, and Yocum in FM

Week Four (Jan 24 and 26): Coding in the larger community: Read Bourke, Mulcahy, Keyes, and Babcock in FM

Week Five (Jan 31; Feb 2): Coding in gay and lesbian folklore: Read special issue of New York Folklore

Week Six (Feb 7 and 9): Fairytales and Ballads: Read Stewart, Gordon, and Stone in FM

Week Seven (Feb 14 and 16): Gender Politics in Everyday Life: Read Mitchell, Levin, Davis-Floyd, Pershing, and Miller from FT

Week Eight (Feb 21 and 23): Cultural Constructions: Read Shuman and Phillips in FT

Week Nine (Feb 28 and Mar 2): Reconsidering Folklore and Gender Studies: Read Green, Young and Turner, Fox, and Kodish in FT

Week Ten (Mar 7 and 9): Selected Readings from Student-Produced Bibliography

Folklore and Gender Politics: The Issues

1. Public/Private
2. Blaming the Victim
3. Tradition and Feminism
4. Ethnography of Sexuality
5. Essentialism
6. Cultural Construction
7. Feminism and Cultural Relativism
8. The Academy and the Activist: Folklore and the Public Sector

Course Policies

*Plagiarism: In a folklore course, you are rewarded for citing others, whether written or oral sources. Your work is **more** valuable to the extent that you cite others rather than claim ideas as your own. Thus, in this course, plagiarism is self-defeating in more than one sense. Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.*

Disabilities: The Office for Disability Services, located in 150 Pomerene Hall, offers services for students with documented disabilities. Contact the ODS at 2-3307. Even if you do not have a documented disability, we are willing to make any accommodations necessary to help you to do your best work for this class.

Attendance: You are expected to attend all classes. If you are unable to attend class, when you return to class, you must submit a written summary of the readings due on that day. More than two absences will result in a lower grade. You are responsible for all materials discussed in class and should make your own arrangements to get notes from another student if you miss class, whether or not the absence is excused. If you anticipate an absence and inform us in advance, we will make every effort to tape-record the class for you.