FOLKLORE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

ENGH 412 002 (79450)/ENGH 591 (79450) & FOLK 560 (81862)

## FALL 2022, 4:30-7:10 TUES, Thompson Hall 2022

**Professor:** Dr. Lisa Gilman (she, her, hers) **Email:** lgilman3@gmu.edu/ **Phone:** 541-285-7043

**Office:** 4111 Horizon Hall **Office Hours:** H 1-3 pm (remote), and by appt

**Office hours:**

**Zoom link:** <https://gmu.zoom.us/j/9606488731>.To visit me during my Thursday 1-3 pm office hours, send me an email or text to tell me that you are joining the zoom. I will **not** automatically be on zoom (though I will be available). You have to let me know so that I can hop on. To schedule an in-person or virtual appointment at another time, email or talk to me after class.

**Communication.** Email is preferred method of communication. Allow 24 hours response. GMU’s policy is to use only Mason accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Activate your Mason e-mail, use it to communicate, and check regularly for university information, including this class.

**Time commitment:** Expect to spend 7-9 hours a week attending lectures, engaging in group activities, reading, doing assignments, etc. (more is expected of grad students). There is a lot of reading for this class, and completing the reading is critical to your success. Be sure to schedule enough time for reading each week.

**Disruptions and special circumstances during pandemic:** The never-ending pandemic is causing disruption in our lives. If necessary, we will schedule remote class meetings or pivot to all virtual at some point during the semester. If taking care of children (or others), sickness (physical and/or mental), technology issues, or other factors are affecting your attending class meetings, completing assignments on time, or otherwise fulfilling course requirements, please communicate with me at your earliest convenience to strategize what we can do to enable you to succeed during this challenging time. I will also ask you to be patient if the pandemic wreaks havoc on my end. I promise to do everything I can to make sure that we can complete a successful, fun, and productive semester.

**Course Description:** This course explores relationships between folklore, gender, and sexuality. We will use theories from folklore, feminism, and gender studies to analyze the role of folklore in the construction and negotiation of gender and sexual identities, how folklore can contribute to gender conflict, and how people use folklore forms to resist and contest gender and sexual inequities. We will take an intersectional approach, understanding that multiple axes of identity intersect in each individual to shape their distinct experiences with gender and sexuality. The focus will be primarily on diverse peoples within the U.S., though course discussions and assignments will expand to global perspectives.

**Learning Outcomes:**

1. Identify, explain, and apply basic concepts in folklore scholarship associated with gender, sexuality, feminism, socialization, and resistance.
2. Identify, explain, and analyze diverse folklore forms related to gender and sexuality in relationship to the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which they are performed, employing appropriate theoretical and methodological approaches.
3. Identify, explain, and critically analyze the role of folklore in community constitution, identity formation, and conflict negotiation for diverse groups of people in the United States
4. Strengthen research, writing, and critical thinking skills.

**Required Readings:** Complete all readings **BEFORE** the class for which they are assigned.

* Whatley, Mariamne H. and Elissa R. Henken. 2000. *Did You Hear About the Girl Who…?: Contemporary Legends, Folklore, and Human Sexuality.* New York Univ. Press. **[Available online through the library or you can order print copy.] https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.mutex.gmu.edu/lib/gmu/reader.action?docID=5928915&ppg=142#ppg=32**
* **All other readings are available electronically (or links provided) on Blackboard.** Go to <http://mymason.gmu.edu> and login using your NETID and password

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**ENGH 412/WMT 450: GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNDERGRAD STUDENTS:**

* **Attendance and participation (20% of final grade):** students will be assessed on their attendance, participation, and completion of in-class writings and activities. *Be prepared for un-announced in-class essays about assigned readings.*
* **Attend one lecture or relevant event (5% of final grade):** Announcements about relevant lectures and events will be made throughout the term. Students are required to attend one and submit a short 1-page paper that includes: name and date of the event, a short 1-paragraph description, and a short 1-paragraph analysis applying one course concept to the event. The event write-ups are due by one week after the event.
* **Folklore Example/Leading Discussion (5% of final grade)**: Students will be required to share a relevant folklore example related to two readings assigned on a particular day (sign-up sheet will be distributed in class). On the assigned day, the student will share the example and offer one or more prompts linking the reading to the example to launch class discussion
* **Term Paper Proposal (5% of final grade, due 9/20). Guidelines TBD**
* **Paper #1 (20% of final grade, due 10/4):** 4-5 page paper that synthesizes key ideas across 3 class readings. **Guidelines TBD**
* **Presentation of term paper/project (5% of final grade, 11/29):** Short presentation of final project. **Guidelines TBD**
* **Term Paper or Project (40% of final grade, due 12/7 by 11:59 PM):** 10-page paper on some aspect of folklore, gender, and sexuality. **Guidelines TBD**

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**ENGH 591 GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS:**

* **Attendance and participation (20% of final grade):** students will be assessed on their attendance, participation, and completion of in-class writings and activities. *Be prepared for un-announced in-class essays about assigned readings.*
* **Attend one lecture or relevant event (5% of final grade):** Announcements about relevant lectures and events will be made throughout the term. Students are required to attend one and submit a short 1-page paper that includes: name and date of the event, a short 1-paragraph description, and a short 1-paragraph analysis applying one course concept to the event. The event write-ups are due by one week after the event.
* **Folklore Example/Leading Discussion (5% of final grade)**: Students will be required to share a relevant folklore example related to two readings assigned on a particular day (sign-up sheet will be distributed in class). On the assigned day, the student will share the example and offer one or more prompts linking the reading to the example to launch class discussion**. *Graduate students are expected to engage a theoretical concept from the reading in their prompt.***
* **Term Paper or Project Proposal (5% of final grade, due 9/20). Guidelines TBD**
* **Paper #1 (20% of final grade, due 10/4):** Pick one theorist referenced in a class reading of your choice. Read the referenced work. Write a 5-7 page paper that clearly articulates the theoretical framework and critically discusses how the author of the class reading uses it. **Guidelines TBD**
* **Presentation of term paper/project (5% of final grade, 11/29):** Short presentation of final project. **Guidelines TBD**
* **Term Paper or Project (40% of final grade, due 12/7 by 11:59 PM):** 15-20-page paper on some aspect of folklore, gender, and sexuality. **Guidelines TBD**

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**Grading scale:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 98-100%/A+ | 88-89/B+ | 78-79/C+ | 68-69/D+ | 0-59/F |
| 93-97/A | 83-87/B | 73-77/C | 63-67/D |  |
| 90 to 92/A- | 80-82/B- | 70-72/C- | 60-62/D- |  |

**Attendance**

* Class meetings are used for discussions, lectures, group assignments, writings, and other activities. Attendance is mandatory and fundamental to your success.
* When academic requirements conflict with observance of religious holidays, students must inform me in advance of holiday.
* If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain notes and materials. If your absence is due to ***excusable*** circumstances, you may meet with me to review missed materials and determine schedule for completing any missed work.
* If excusable circumstances prevent your attendance or turning in an assignment on time, communicate with me **before** or **within 24 hours after** due date (this requirement lifted in extreme circumstances). You cannot make-up assignments missed due to unexcused circumstances. Late papers (not due to excusable circumstances or to agreement with me) will drop one letter grade each day they are late.

## Enrollment Statement: Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment.  Adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. See <https://registrar.gmu.edu>: *Last Day to Drop with full refund 9/6, Last Day to Drop (100% tuition liability) 9/27*

**Respectful Learning Community**

It is important that we each contribute to creating an environment in which everyone feels free to express opinions while simultaneously respecting a plurality of perspectives. In order to reduce unnecessary distractions and disruptions, please respect the following rules:

* Arrive to class before class begins.
* Turn off cell phones (no answering phones or text messaging during class).
* Listen, speak, and pay attention respectfully (no private conversation during class).
* Come prepared: do readings **before** the class period in which they will be discussed.
* Wait until the end of class before putting books/papers away.

**Diversity and Inclusion/Classroom Community:** This course seeks to create a supported learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, ethnicity, economic status, sexuality, national origin, citizenship status, first language, religion, age, and ability. We encourage all members of our learning community to engage with course materials on a personal level, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different from our own.

We will be discussing difficult and controversial topics. We will work together to create a supported environment in which each of us can speak from our own positions and honor the experiences of others. This class requires us to be able to take risks knowing that we won’t immediately be “cancelled”. Learning and growth do not happen through being shut down or judged immediately. We need to each be aware about how our comments will be interpreted by others.

Remember that a passing comment spoken in class can be forgotten a few minutes later, but what you share in an online classroom is part of a permanent digital record. Even an innocent remark in the online environment can be easily misconstrued. Please re-read anything you write carefully before you post them so others will not take them out of context or as personal attacks.  Be positive to others and diplomatic with your words, and I will try my best to do the same. Do not expect that everybody shares your perspective.  Be careful when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications, your joke may be viewed as criticism.

Please communicate with me (it can be anonymously) if you are feeling attacked or find the tone of a discussion to be problematic. I will also be vigilant and will do my part to facilitate positive course dynamics.

**Immigration status:** Students of all immigration statuses are welcomed and valued in this classroom, including undocumented students, students from mixed-status families, and students with Temporary Protected Status. As an educator, I aim to create a learning environment that respects and affirms the diversity of students’ experiences and perspectives. If your status is impacting your success in the course, please come see me to discuss things I can do to accommodate you (assignments, attendance, etc.). I pledge to keep your status confidential unless required by judicial warrant.

**Disabilities and Accessibility:** Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit http://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email:ods@gmu.edu | Phone: (703) 993-2474.

**Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence:** GMU is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](https://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/sexual-harassment-policy/) speaks to the specifics of Mason’s process, the resources, and the options available to students.  You may seek assistance from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730 or email [cde@gmu.edu](mailto:cde@gmu.edu). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as [Student Support and Advocacy Center](https://ssac.gmu.edu/faculty-and-staff/) (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or [Counseling and Psychology Services](https://caps.gmu.edu/) (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. The 24-hour GMU Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence Crisis Line is 703-380-1434.

**Academic Integrity:**It is expected that students adhere to the George Mason University’s Honor Code as it relates to integrity regarding coursework and grades.  The Honor Code reads as follows: “To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal and/or lie in matters related to academic work.”  More information about the Honor Code, including definitions of cheating, lying, and plagiarism, can be found at the Office of Academic Integrity website at [http://oai.gmu.edu](http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/)

**Mason’s Honor Code** has clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, see me. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.

**Student privacy:** For information about Mason’s policy on student privacy, please go to <https://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/>

**Course Materials and Student Privacy**

Videorecordings of class meetings that are shared only with the instructors and students officially enrolled in a class do not violate FERPA or any other privacy expectation.

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private; by federal law, any materials that identify specific students (via their name, voice, or image) must not be shared with anyone not enrolled in this class.

* Video recordings of class meetings that include audio or visual information from other students are private and must not be shared
* Live Video Conference Meetings (e.g. Collaborate or Zoom) that include audio or visual information from other students must be viewed privately and not shared with others in your household.

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**SCHEDULE OF CLASS READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

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**WEEK 1 (8/23): INTRO TO COURSE**

* What is gender?
  + Is Gender a Social Construct? Ask Jack: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PyLEpHj5vT4>
* Nigerian author Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s Ted Talk: “The Danger of a Single Story”[**https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\_adichie\_the\_danger\_of\_a\_single\_story#t-192008**](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story#t-192008)
* What is folklore?
* What is feminism?
* What is an intersectional approach?

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**WEEK 2 (8/30): FOLKLORE, PERFORMATIVITY, GENDER, AND SEX EDUCATION**

* Butler, Judith. 1993. “Introduction.” *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of ‘Sex.’* New York: Routledge.
* @esme.louisee #KinkyHistory: <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZMRnPTDHu/>
* Whatley and Henken, Chapters 1-5

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**WEEK 3 (9/6): FOLKLORE, GENDER, AND SEX EDUCATION**

* Whatley and Henken, Chapters 6-10
* Abraham, Laurie. 2011. Teaching Good Sex: A Frank, Fearless Approach to the Birds and the Bees. *The New York Times Magazine*, November 20. <https://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/20/magazine/teaching-good-sex.html>

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**WEEK 4 (9/13): FOLKLORE, CHILDHOOD, AND THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF GENDER: THE CASE OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD**

* Perrault, Charles. 1989. Little Red Riding Hood. In *Little Red Riding Hood: A Case Book*, ed. Alan Dundes, pp. 3-6. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
* Grimm, Jakob and Wilhelm. 1989. Little Red Cap (Rotkäppchen). In *Little Red Riding Hood: A Case Book*, ed. Alan Dundes, pp. 7-12. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
* Zipes, Jack. 1993. The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood. In *The Trial and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood*, pp. 17-88 . New York: Routledge.
* Beckett, Sandra L. 2001-02. Who’s Afraid of Little Red Riding Hood? Play, Parody, and Political Correctness in Contemporary Retellings*. CREArTA* 2(2): 30-43.

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**WEEK 5 (9/20): FOLKLORE AND MULTIPLE FEMINITIES**

**\*\*\*Term Paper Proposals Due\*\*\***

* Hearne, Joanna. 2017. “I Am Not a Fairy Tale:: Indigenous Storytelling on Canadian Television.” *Marvels & Tales* 31(1):126–46. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_journals_1923968590>
* Cantú, Norma E. 2020. Wearing Identity: Chicanas and Huipiles. In MeXicana Fashions: Politics, Self-Adornment, and Identity Construction, eds. Aída Hurtado and Norma E. Cantú, pp. 25-50. Austin: University of Texas Press. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.mutex.gmu.edu/lib/gmu/reader.action?docID=5928915&ppg=142#ppg=32>
* Radner, Joan N. and Susan S. Lanser. 1993. Strategies of Coding in Women’s Culture. In *Feminist Messages: Coding in Women’s Folk Culture*, eds. Radner and Lanser, pp. 1-29. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.

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**WEEK 6 (9/27): FOLKLORE AND MULTIPLE MASCULINITIES**

* Daryl Cumber Dance. 2015. Can Trayvon Get a Witness? African American Folklore Elucidates the Trayvon Martin Case. *CLA journal* 58 (3/4): 147–153. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_journals_1736337529>
* Coles, Tony. 2009. Negotiating the Field of Masculinity: The Production and Reproduction of Multiple Dominant Masculinities. *Men and Masculinities* 12 (1):30-44. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_60319313>
* Gilman, Lisa. 2016. Ch. 5 Music, Gender, and the Paradox of Masculinity. *My Music, My War: The Listening Habits of U.S. Troops in Iraq and Afghanistan*, pp. 80-112. Middletown, CN: Wesleyan University Press.

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**WEEK 7 (10/4): BREAKING DOWN THE GENDER BINARY**

**\*\*\*Paper #1 Due\*\*\***

* Ashley Lourdes Hunter lecture: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A5DUo-rWZkQ>
* Cipolle, Alex. V. 2015. Transcendent Man: Eugene Trans Activist Aydian Dowling Uses Newfound Viral Stardom to Shine Light on Trans Issues. *Eugene Weekly*, March 5.
* **Youtube and transgender transformation:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxeh8ZLzyDo>
* Williams, Jeffrey. J. 2011. The Drag of Masculinity: An Interview with Judith “Jack.” *Symplokē* 19 (1-2) 361-80.
* Garlough, Christine. 2015. Refiguring the South Asian American Tradition Bearer: Performing the ‘Third Gender’ in Yoni Ki Baat. *The Journal of American folklore* 128(510): 412–43. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_journals_1862313290>
* Jack, Jordynn. 2012. Gender Copia: Feminist Rhetorical Perspectives on an Autistic Concept of Sex/Gender. *Women’s studies in communication* 35.1 (2012): 1–17.

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**WEEK 8 (10/11): NO CLASS**

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**WEEK 9 (10/18): FOLKLORE AND QUEER SPACES**

* Gilman. Lisa. Forthcoming. Cake is Better than Sex: Pride and Prejudice in the Folklore of and about Asexuality*. Journal of Folklore Research.*
* Gilley, Brian. 2005. Two-Spirit Powwows and the Search for Social Acceptance in Indian Country. In *Powwow*, eds. Clyde Ellis, Luke Eric Lassiter, and Gary H. Dunham, pp. 224-40. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
* Badruddoja, Roksana.2008. Queer Spaces, Places, and Gender: The Tropologies of Rupa and Ronica. *NWSA Journal*. 20 (2): 156-88. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_projectmuse_journals_246761_S1527188908200111>

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**WEEK 10 (10/25): FOLKLORE, GENDER, IDENTIFICATION, AND DIFFERENTIATION:**

* Bauman, Richard. 2000 [1972]. Differential Identity and the Social Base of Folklore. In *Toward New Perspectives in Folklore*, eds. Américo Paredes, pp. 40-53. Bloomington: Trickster Press.
* Murphy, Peter F. 2001. Chapter 6. Insidious Humor and the Construction of Masculinity*. Studs, Tools, and the Family Tools: Metaphors Men Live By*. Madison: Wisconsin University Press.
* Bing, Janet. 2007. Liberated Jokes: Sexual Humor in All-Female Groups*. International Journal of Humor Research* 20(4): 337-66. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_85695343>

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**WEEK 11 (11/1): FOLKLORE, GENDER, SEXUALITY, AND THE ELECTIONS**

* Chávez, Alex E. 2021. Gender, Ethno-Nationalism, and the Anti-Mexicanist Trope. *Journal of American Folklore* 134(531): 3-24. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_journals_2629432473>.
* Turner, Patricia A. 2018. Respecting the Smears: Anti-Obama Folklore Anticipates Fake News. *Journal of American Folklore* 131(522):421-25. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_gale_lrcgauss_A560836386>
* Thomas, Jeannie B. 1997. Dumb Blondes, Dan Quayle, and Hillary Clinton: Gender, Sexuality, and Stupidity in Jokes. *The Journal of American Folklo*re 110 (437): 277-313. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_journals_198505835>

**\*\*11/3 Guest lecture by Patricia Turner at 4:30. Details TBA\*\***

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**WEEK 12 (11/8): PERFORMANCE, BODY, AND ABILITY**

* Bordo, Susan, (1993). Introduction. In *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*, pp. 1-42. Berkeley, CA: Univ. of California Press.
* Maysoon Zayid Ted Talk: <https://www.ted.com/talks/maysoon_zayid_i_got_99_problems_palsy_is_just_one?language=en>
* Manderson, Lenore and Susan Peake. 2008. Men in Motion: Disability and the Performance of Masculinity. In *Bodies in Commotion: Disability and Performance*, eds. Carrie Sandahl and Philip Auslander, pp. 230-42. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.
* Darcy Holtgrave. 2015. Broadcasting the Stigmatized Self: Positioning Functions of YouTube Vlogs on Bipolar Disorder. In *Diagnosing Folklore*, eds. Andrea Kitta and Trevor J. Blank, pp. 175-93. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2015.

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**WEEK 13 (11/15): PERFORMING WITHIN AND AGAINST BOUNDARIES: FOLKLORE, NEW MEDIA, AND PEMINISM**

* Rak, Julie. 2005. The Digital Queer: Weblogs and Internet Identity. *Biography* 28 (1): 166-82. <https://wrlc-gm.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01WRLC_GML/19u1omk/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_85695343>
* Daly, Perla Paredes. 2005. Creating NewFilipina.com and the Rise of CyberPinays. In *Pinay Power: Peminist Critical theory: Theorizing the Filipina/American Experience*. ed. Melinda L. de Jesús, pp. 221-38. Routledge: New York and London.
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**WEEK 14 (11/22): FOLKLORE, GENDER, AND FOODWAYS**

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**WEEK 15 (11/29): STUDENT PRESENTATIONS OF FINAL PROJECTS**

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**TERM PROJECTS DUE ON DEC 7 BY 11:59 PM**

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION VIA BLACKBOARD OR HARD COPY AT MY OFFICE