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Office: 321 Condon  
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### **Anth 419/519 Performance, Politics, and Folklore**

This seminar investigates the definitions, ownership, and display of folklore, heritage, and culture by examining sites such as museums, heritage parks, folklore festivals, community events, and tourist destinations. An interdisciplinary approach explores the aesthetic, political, economic, and social dimensions of cultural performances. We will explore contemporary issues in performance studies with an emphasis on the post-1970's period, when the study of context and event emerged in folklore and linguistic scholarship. The study of performance involves an exploration of the aesthetic, political, and artistic dimensions of social interaction. One thread of inquiry examines performances as embedded in structured events that have distinct boundaries and have performer and audience roles. Other threads of inquiry interrogate the meanings and histories of performances, their political dimensions, their interactions with national, local, and international agendas (such as UNESCO), and the agency of their actors. What are the varied meanings of performances, and how do they relate to varied identities? How does performance relate to hierarchy, power, and resistance? Why does appropriation raise issues of hierarchy? This course ties together interdisciplinary threads from folklore, anthropology, cultural studies, linguistics, feminism, queer theory, ethnomusicology, film studies, and theater arts.

The class utilizes a **Canvas** site. Under **Syllabus**, you can find the course syllabus which includes a guide to the Journal. Under **Modules** there is folder titled **Readings** which includes all the article readings. Other short readings are online via urls. Canvas **Discussions** is a site to post outlines, comments, further materials, and to ask questions. I welcome questions and feedback via email, telephone, in writing (I have a comment bag available at every class), and during office hours.

Several recently published recommended books have been ordered for the Bookstore; *Romani Routes* required pages are on Canvas. The others are not required but are for possible projects:

Silverman, Carol. *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora* (Oxford, 2012).  
Shay , Anthony. *Dangerous Lives of Public Performers* (Palgrave, 2014).  
Khesti, Roshanak. *Modernity's Ear: Listening to Race and Gender in World Music* (NYU Press, 2015)

**Please turn off all mobile devices during class. Please, no texting. Computer use is permitted for class related activities, such as note taking.**

**Plagiarism is not tolerated at the UO. Your work must be your own and you must cite authors.**

#### **Requirements:**

1. **10%** of your grade is based on attendance. Please be on time.
2. **20%** of your grade is based on class participation. Discussion is the mode of the course. 10% is awarded for general participation, and 10% for presentations. Students are required to pick 2

dates on which to present and lead discussion in class on the issues raised in the readings/films. On the first day of class, we will review varied ways of facilitating discussion.

**Using Canvas Discussions, students are required to post comments and outlines and questions on the readings/films prior to their oral presentations (at least 1 page single spaced). The deadline is 5 PM of the day previous to the presentation.**

3. **70% (50% for graduate students)** of your grade is based on two 8pp. installments of an evaluative/interpretive/critical journal on the required readings/films. I suggest that students write a few pages per session, and have them ready before class. These pages can then be re-thought, expanded and/or edited into the journal.

The first written installment is due **Feb 8** in class, and covers the readings/films through Feb 3; **35%. (25% for graduate students)**

The second is due **Monday March 14** at noon, and covers the readings/films through the end of the term: **35% (25% for graduate students)**

Journal guidelines will be mutually developed, see end of syllabus.

4. **Graduate Students (20%):** Each graduate student will write an original paper or project. Ideally, you will propose a project that relates directly to or is a part of your graduate work. You may choose an ethnography to read and critically review (I can help you find one that dovetails with your interest). You may do a mini-ethnography of an event or performance. Collaborative projects are welcome. An oral presentation on your project will be made on March 7 or 9. The written paper/project (10 pages) is due **Monday March 14** at noon in 321 Condon. A 1-page proposal for the project is due **Jan 13** and an outline is due **Feb 15**.

#### **Grading Rubric:**

A Outstanding performance relative to that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at the highest level.

B Performance that is significantly above that required to meet course requirements; demonstrates a mastery of course content at a high level.

C Performance that meets the course requirements in every respect; demonstrates an adequate understanding of course content.

D Performance that is at the minimal level necessary to pass the course but does not fully meet the course requirements; demonstrates a marginal understanding of course content.

F Performance in the course is unacceptable and does not meet the course requirements; demonstrates an inadequate understanding of the course content.

#### **Course Objectives**

- Learn about the contested definitions of folklore, heritage, and culture through examination of sites such as museums, heritage parks, folklore festivals, community events, and tourist destinations.
- Trace the aesthetic, political, economic, and social dimensions of cultural performances.
- Trace the history of performance studies with an emphasis on the post-1970's period.

- Analyze how performances as embedded are structured events that have distinct boundaries and have performer and audience roles, and those which do not have such distinct roles
- Interrogate the meanings and histories of performances, their political dimensions, their interactions with national, local, and international agendas (such as UNESCO), and the agency of their actors.
- Analyze how performances relate to varied identities, hierarchy, power, and resistance.
- Define and analyze the concept of appropriation.

### **Readings and Films**

All required readings and three films (Paris is Burning, Cannibal Tours, Weaving Worlds) must be read/viewed prior to the class in which we discuss them. Please plan ahead. The required readings consist of articles on Canvas and a few journalistic readings and video clips (found via the URL). Note: Several recommended books have been ordered in the bookstore. The excerpts from them are posted on Canvas

### **Outline:**

**1. Jan 4:** Introductions and goals of the course. Debates about the definition of folklore. Historical relationship between folklore, theater, and anthropology. Precursors to the performance approach. The ethnography of communication approach in the 1970's. What are the limits of performance?

**2. Jan 6:** Events, Contexts, Performances. Verbal Arts and Performance.

Bauman, Richard

1975 Verbal Art as Performance. American Anthropologist 77:290-311. (Reprinted and expanded in a Waveland Press Book, same title, 1984.)

**3. Jan 11:** The ethnography of experience: ritual, drama narrative.

Turner, Victor

1990 Are there Universals of Performance in Myth, Ritual, and Drama? In By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theater and Ritual. eds. Richard Schechner and Willa Appel, Cambridge, pp. 8-18.

Myerhoff, Barbara

1972 Life History among the Elderly: Performance Visibility and Re-membering, in A Crack in the Mirror: Reflexive Perspectives in Anthropology, ed. Jay Ruby, Univ. of Penn., pp. 99-117.

**4. Jan 13:** Performance, Meaning, Aesthetics, Narrative Arts.

Schechner, Richard

1985 Between Theater and Anthropology. Univ. of Penn, pp. 3-33.

Schieffelin, Edward

1985 Performance and the Cultural Construction of Reality. American Ethnologist 12(4):707-724.

**5. Jan 20:** Performativity/Gender as Performance/ Queer Theory: Race, Class, Sexuality. Film: *Paris Is Burning*, Jennie Livingston Director, 1991 78 minutes. View this film on your own (on reserve).

Sullivan, Nikki.

2003 A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory, Chapter 5: Performance, Performativity, Parody, and Politics, pp.81-98, NYU Press.

Butler, Judith: Video: gender as performative:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fndkPPJBi1U>

**Graduate Students (and interested undergraduates):**

Butler, Judith

1993 Bodies That Matter. Routledge, pp. 121-140.

**6. Jan 25:** Inventing Tradition, Questioning Authenticity.

Handler, Richard and Jocelyn Linnekin

1984 Tradition, Genuine or Spurious. Journal of American Folklore 97(385):273-290.

Gable, Eric, and Richard Handler

1996 After Authenticity at an American Heritage Site. American Anthropologist 98(3): 568-578.

**7. Jan 27:** Native and Outsider Perspectives on Authenticity: Politics of Identity

Keesing, Roger

1989 Creating the Past: Custom and Identity in the Contemporary Pacific. The Contemporary Pacific 1(1-2):19-42, spring-fall. Excerpt in Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Cultural Anthropology, eds. R. Welsch and K. Endicott (McGraw, 2006),pp. 71-79.

Trask, Haunani-Kay

1991 Natives and Anthropologists: The Colonial Struggle. The Contemporary Pacific 3:159-167, spring. Excerpt in Taking Sides: Clashing Views in Cultural Anthropology, eds. R. Welsch and K. Endicott (McGraw, 2006),pp. 80-86.

**8. Feb 1:** Tourism, Globalization, and Display Film: Cannibal Tours. View this film on your own (on reserve).

Bruner, Edward

2001 The Maasai and the Lion King: Authenticity, Nationalism, and Globalization in African Tourism. American Ethnologist 28(4):881-908. Reprinted in Culture on Tour (Univ. of Chicago, 2003).

Preserving Culture, protecting Wildlife: <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/11/03/travel/in-namibia-conservation-and-tourism-intersect.html>

**9. Feb 3:** Tradition and the Politics of Identity

Briggs, Charles

1996 The Politics of Discursive Authority in Research on the "Invention of Tradition." Cultural Anthropology 11(4):435-469.

**10. Feb 8:** Ethnicity, Hierarchy, and Conflict. **Journals due.**

Film: Gathering Up Again. Film on Santa Fe Festival. We will view this film in class.

**11. Feb 10:** Art Markets, Native Crafts, and Navajo Rugs. Film: Weaving Worlds (57 minutes, on reserve).

2002 M'Closkey, Kathy. From Flea Market to Fifth Avenue: Tracking the Investment Market. In Swept Under the Rug: A Hidden History of Navajo Weaving, pp. 171-205. University of New Mexico Press.

**12. Feb 15:** Performing Authenticity: Aboriginal Art and its Publics

Myers, Fred

1994 Culture-making: Performing Aboriginality at Asia Society Gallery. American Ethnologist 21(4): 679-699.

Myers, Fred

2007 Painting Culture: The Making of an Aboriginal High Art, pp. 1-17. Duke University Press.

**13. Feb 17:** Display, Representation, Museums

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara

1998 Objects of Ethnography. In Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage. University of California Press, pp. 1-78.

West, Richard

2000 A New Idea of Ourselves: The Changing Presentation of the American Indian, pp. 7-13 and Cultural Rethink, pp. 99-102, In The Changing Presentation of the American Indian. National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution.

Refugees become guides to Germany's historical treasures By Frank Jordans , December 17, 2015.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/refugees-become-guides-to-germanys-historical-treasures/2015/12/17/e2b510a0-a4d0-11e5-8318-bd8caed8c588\\_story.html?tid=ss\\_tw](https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/museums/refugees-become-guides-to-germanys-historical-treasures/2015/12/17/e2b510a0-a4d0-11e5-8318-bd8caed8c588_story.html?tid=ss_tw)

**14. Feb 22:** Intangible Cultural Heritage/Intellectual Property Rights: UNESCO initiatives.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara (this is in 2 parts on Canvas)

2007 World Heritage and Cultural Economics. In Museum Frictions: Public Culture/Global Transformations, eds. C. Kratz, I. Karp, L. Szwaja, and T. Ybarra-Frausto, pp. 161-202. Duke University Press.

**15. Feb 24:** Appropriation and Ownership

Evans-Pritchard, Deidre

1987 The Portal Case: Authenticity, Tourism, and the Law. Journal of American Folklore 100(397): 287-296.

Brown, Michael

2004 Who Owns Native Culture? Harvard University, pp. 1-21.

Hopis Try to Stop Paris Sale of Artifacts:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/04/arts/design/hopi-tribe-wants-to-stop-paris-auction-of-artifacts.html>

Where'd you go with my DNA?

<http://www.nytimes.com/2010/04/25/weekinreview/25harmon.html?pagewanted=all>

In a Shirt, Indian Family Sees its History

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/28/arts/design/in-a-shirt-indian-family-sees-its-history.html>

Optional: Brown, Michael. 2005. Heritage Trouble: Recent Work on the Protection of Intangible Cultural Property. International Journal of Cultural Property (2005) 12:40–61.

**16. Feb 29:** Current Debates about Appropriation.

Sehgal, Parul. Takeover: Is Cultural Appropriation Always Wrong? On Canvas.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/04/magazine/is-cultural-appropriation-always-wrong.html>

Johnson, Kirk. Halloween Costume Correctness on Campus: Feel Free to Be You, but Not Me. On Canvas.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/31/us/cultural-appropriation-halloween-costumes.html>

Johnson, Kirk. R, Perez-Pena, J. Eligon. Rachel Dolezal, in Center of Storm, Is Defiant: 'I Identify as Black'. On Canvas.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/17/us/rachel-dolezal-nbc-today-show.html>

Uwujaren, Jarune. 2013. The Difference Between Cultural Exchange and Cultural Appropriation. September 30, 2013. <http://everydayfeminism.com/2013/09/cultural-exchange-and-cultural-appropriation/>

Johnson, Maisha. What's Wrong with Cultural Appropriation? These 9 Answers Reveal Its Harm June 14, 2015

<http://everydayfeminism.com/2015/06/cultural-appropriation-wrong/>

Sarah Jones' Comedy: <http://www.npr.org/2014/11/14/362366569/what-s-the-line-between-stereotyping-celebrating-culture>

**17. Mar 2:** Romani Music as World Music: Marketing of Exoticism  
Issues of Representation and Political Economy

Silverman, Carol.

2012 *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 12: Romani Music as World Music, pp. 214-268.

**18. Mar 7:** Appropriation, DJs, and Gypsy Music

Silverman, Carol.

2012 *Romani Routes: Cultural Politics and Balkan Music in Diaspora*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 13: Collaboration, Appropriation and Transnational Flows, pp. 269-294.

**19. Mar 9:** Presentations

**Journals and projects due Monday March 14, noon.**

**Journal Guide (draft)**

Maximum 8pp. Double spaced, 12 pt font. You may omit one article/film at most.

Points will be deducted for late papers and for papers exceeding the page limit.

1" margins, staple corner. Place your name in a header.

You are encouraged to group articles and emphasize theoretical themes, and analytical contrasts and similarities.

If you cite relevant authors in the required readings, just cite the page number.

1. What are the author's main objectives, goals and agendas?

2. What is the context for the writing of this article/making of this film? To what body of theory does the article relate?
3. What are the major findings?
4. Do you agree with the arguments? why? why not?
5. How does the article relate to the issues and theoretical debates previously discussed in class? You may also bring in readings from outside the class, and of course, your own experiences.
6. How do you evaluate the article/film? What questions does it raise for you?