Gender, Folklore, and Inequality

This class explores the expressive and artistic realms of gendered lives in cross-cultural perspective in relation to questions of politics, power, resistance, and creativity. We examine the history of anthropology and folklore and ask whether an egalitarian, emancipatory, inclusive, and feminist anthropology/folklore is possible. Topics include pollution beliefs, life-cycle events and rituals (initiations, marriage, childbirth), motherhood and fatherhood, religion, narrative, visual and musical arts, sexuality in its broadest framework, and gender and human rights (via case studies of marriage and female genital cutting). Case studies are drawn from many different cultures. We will view several documentary films and host guest speakers.