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:


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
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?


Bauman, Richard


Turner, Victor

Myerhoff, Barbara


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

Schieffelin, Edward


Sullivan, Nikki.

Butler, Judith: Video: gender as performative: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnkPPBi1U

Graduate Students (and interested undergraduates):
Butler, Judith


Handler, Richard and Jocelyn Linnekin

Gable, Eric, and Richard Handler


Keesing, Roger

Trask, Haunani-Kay

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

Bruner, Edward


Briggs, Charles


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).


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

Myers, Fred

Myers, Fred

13. Feb 17: Display, Representation, Museums

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, Barbara

West, Richard


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

15. Feb 24: Appropriation and Ownership

Evans-Pritchard, Deidre

Brown, Michael


In a Shirt, Indian Family See is its History http://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/28/arts/design/in-a-shirt-indian-family-sees-its-history.html


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


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


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?