

INTRODUCTION TO FOLKLORE (GENRES)  
English 1700, Fall 2008  
MWF 9:00-9:50

INSTRUCTOR

Constance Bailey

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Office: Rm. 1, Tate Hall

Office Hours: MW 12:30-3:00, By Appointment

GUEST LECTURERS

Darcy Holtgrave

Shelley Ingram

Claire Schmidt

REQUIRED TEXTS

Alexie, Sherman. *Lone Ranger & Tonto Fistfight in Heaven*.

Brunvand, Jan. *Study of American Folklore*.

Naylor, Gloria. *Mama Day*.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Although this is an introductory course in folklore, it is specifically designed to give you an overview of various folklore genres. To that end, the course will act as a survey course and will primarily expose you to readings that constitute one or more genres of folklore. Through critical engagement with the texts, you will develop a better understanding of concepts like ethnography, which are essential to the study of folklore.

COURSE POLICIES

**Attendance.** You will be allowed to miss the six classes without penalty. Any absence beyond six will result in points being deducted from your final grade or your being dropped from the course. If you feel that you might have a problem with attendance for any reason, health or otherwise, please talk to me so that a withdrawal or some other alternative can be arranged.

**Late Work.** You will be responsible for completing all assignments as they come due. **No Late Work Will Be Accepted.** You will be informed of the dates any assignments are due or when an exam will be held. If you have a problem with meeting one of these dates, you **MUST** contact me **PRIOR** to the due date of the assignment or exam.

**Reading.** The reading assigned for each class period must be completed before class. You will also be expected to bring the text or texts we are discussing to class because we will often be referring to specific passages. Remember that academic reading is not a passive activity. You should strive to gain the highest degree of understanding about the work that you can. That means reading with a pen or pencil and making margin notes, folding down page corners, marking important passages, using post-its, or whatever. This way, when you make a comment in class, you can then refer exactly to what you are talking about in the text. You will find that you will retain more information when you read this way and you will be able to participate in discussions with greater confidence.

**Blackboard/Web Enhancements.** This class will rely heavily on Blackboard and other technological resources to supplement class discussions. Blackboard can be accessed at <http://courses.missouri.edu>. You need to be aware of what is going on in Blackboard, follow any discussions that are taking place on the discussion boards and

be aware of any announcements. This is where I will post any changes to the syllabus as well as links to some articles. It is also a good place to put down your thoughts, ask questions that other people might share, and check on your grades. Many of your documents are available through ERES, which can be accessed at <http://eres.missouri.edu>. The password for this course is folklore.

**Plagiarism.** Simply stated, plagiarism is taking someone else's ideas and presenting them as your own. It includes any use of the words or ideas of another writer that would allow readers unfamiliar with the source to assume that the words or ideas originated with you. This can be done deliberately or by mistake. Either way it is a serious matter. In addition to receiving a failing grade for the assignment, I am required by the University to report all instances of plagiarism to the Provost's office. If the Provost's office determines that the plagiarism constitutes academic dishonesty, penalties may be as severe as suspension or expulsion from the university.

## ASSIGNMENTS

Your grade for this class will be based on a number of collection assignments, a midterm, a final plus a short final essay and participation as outlined before. The specific details of some assignments will be given closer to the assignment due date.

- Collection Assignment 15%
- Midterm 20%
- Final Exam 20%
- Final Essay 15%
- Reading Responses 20%
- Participation 10%

### ***Collection Assignment***

Part of your final grade will be based on a two-page analytical collection assignment. This assignment will require you to bring in a transcript of some item of folklore that you have collected. It should be approximately 2 pages (400-500 words) and consist of a transcription of the item along with contextual information (who told it, what folk group the teller is from, what was the situation in which the teller told the item, who was the audience, what was the response of the audience, etc.) and your personal response and analysis of the item (what is your attitude about the item, had you ever heard it before, why did you think the item is told, how is it used by the folk group, etc.)

### ***Reading Responses***

Approximately once per week, you will be expected to write a short (one page, approximately 250-300 words) paper that is your personal response to one or more of the readings for that week. THESE SHOULD NOT BE SUMMARIES. Instead, these responses are an opportunity for you to look for important themes, ask interesting questions, or think about how these texts make you look at old questions in new ways. These responses are also a place for you to express your personal opinions about the readings as long as you can intelligently support your opinion. (It is not enough to simply say, "I hated this" or "This was interesting." If you make an assertion like this, you must explain why.

### ***Essay***

For one of the final assignments of the semester you will write a short analytical essay comparing some tradition piece of folklore with a contemporary adaptation. For example, a student might compare a traditional folktale with a film adaptation, a folk song with a new interpretation, an old urban legend with an updated version or adaptation, etc. This paper should be three-five pages and should strive to talk about what the cultural trends or values the modern day adaptation reflects rather than simply stating the difference between the old and new versions.

### ***Participation***

Participation means more than just being present, woke, or even actively participating in the discussion. It also means being attentive and respectful to your peers, lecturers, or instructor. This means that not only can text messaging, checking email, surfing the web, etc. detract from your participation grade, but you may also be asked to leave the class. This is distracting and extremely rude.

## Course Schedule

**ER=Eres**

**BB=Blackboard**

Date	Unit	Reading Schedule	Due
M 8/25	<b>What is Folklore?</b>		
W 8/27		BB=Brunvand, Ch. 1 & 2	
F 8/29		ER=Ben-Amos, "Towards a Definition . . ."	
W 9/3		In Class-Will, "Art Unburdened by Excellence"	
F 9/5		BB: Pimple, "Folk Belief"	
M 9/8	<b>Folklore &amp; Pop Culture</b>	ER= "Allomotifs and the Psychoanalytic . . ."	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 9/10		ER=Santino "Yellow Ribbons and Seasonal Flags. . ."	
F 9/12		ER= Sherman "Perils of the Princess . . ."	
M 9/15	<b>Ethics &amp; Ethnography</b>	BB=Toelken, "Fieldwork Enlightenment"	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 9/17		BB=Walls, "Ethics & the Student Fieldworker"	
F 9/19		BB=Lawless, "I Knew Somebody Like You . . ."	
M 9/22	<b>Public &amp; Material Culture</b>	Brunvand, Ch. 19 & 20	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 9/24		Reading Day/Blackboard Discussion	
F 9/26		Brady , "Tourism. . .in the Ozark Riverways"	
M 9/29	<b>Foodways</b>	ER=Newton, "The Jell-O Syndrome"	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 10/1		Reading Day/Blackboard Discussion	
F 10/3		TBA	
M 10/6		BB=Aschoff, "Understanding the Blues in	<b>Reading</b>

		Context?	Response
W 10/8	<b>Folk Music &amp; Folk Culture</b>	Reading Day/Blackboard Discussion	
F 10/10		Brunvand, Ch. 11 & 13	
M 10/13		Brunvand, Ch. 15	
W 10/15		Reading Day/Blackboard Discussion	
F 10/17		Brunvand, Ch. 16	<b>Midterm</b>
M 10/20	<b>The Folktale</b>	Brunvand, Ch. 10	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 10/22		Reading Day/Virtual Classroom	
F 10/24		Selected folktales-TBA	
M 10/27	<b>Myths &amp; Legends</b>	Brunvand, Ch. 8 & 9	
W 10/29		<i>Lone Ranger &amp; Tonto</i>	
F 10/31		<i>Lone Ranger &amp; Tonto</i>	<b>Collection Assignment</b>
M 11/3	<b>Folklore &amp; Power</b>	ER=Peers, "Native Americans in Museums"	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 11/5		ER=hooks, "Eating the Other"	
F 11/7		ER= Williams, "The Bachelor's Transgression"	
M 11/10		ER=McIntosh, "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack"	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 11/12		BB=Hathaway, "Unbearable Weight of Authenticity"	
F 11/14		ER=Prahlad, "Guess Who's Coming . . ."	
M 11/17	<b>Verbal Folklore</b>	Brunvand, "New Legends for Old"	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 11/19		ER=Dundes, "Many Hands Make Light Work"	
F 11/21		Brunvand, Ch. 5 & 6	

M 12/1	<b>Folklore &amp; Literature</b>	<i>Mama Day</i>	<b>Reading Response</b>
W 12/3		<i>Mama Day</i>	
F 12/5		<i>Mama Day</i> , Prahlad, “All Chicken’s Come . . .”	
M 12/8		Brunvand, Ch. 14, Evaluations	
W 12/10		Exam Review	<b>Final Essay</b>
F 12/12		READING DAY/NO CLASS	