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WGSS 395F-01
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FEMINISM, COMEDY, AND HUMOR

Fall 2019

“Comedians who insist that...funny is funny and comedy should be able to challenge anything and be an ‘equal opportunity offender’—sure, but there’s laughter and there’s laughter...If comedy is going to be taken as an art form...it has to be able to be criticized. You can’t just say your reaction as an audience is either to laugh or shut up and that’s the only thing you can do.”

--Glen Weldon, “NPR: Pop Culture Happy Hour Podcast,” 19 December 2014

Please Note: This syllabus is a dense document, but contains almost everything you need to know about the class (but were afraid to ask!) It is your contract, guidebook, ultimate resource. When you have a question, consult the syllabus first before contacting the instructor.

Course Description

The popularity of shows like “Broad City” and the clout of performers such as Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Wanda Sykes have arguably put to rest the old stereotype that women aren’t funny. More importantly, they have all shown that comedy and humor can be vehicles for feminist messages. In so doing, they have built upon a legacy established by performers, writers, directors, and activists extending back to feminism’s “first wave.” In this course, we will examine the intersections of feminism, comedy, and humor, and will explore questions such as: In what ways are comedy and humor gendered? What roles do race, class, and sexuality play? Why have feminists, and women more generally, been seen as inherently unfunny? How have feminists used humor and comedy for political ends? We will also broadly consider the ethics, politics, and social and cultural purposes of comedy and humor. Beyond analyzing a wide range of media, genres, and practices, we will create our own forms of feminist comedic interventions.

This course is “blended,” meaning it will happen both online and in-class. Each week you will complete assignments during your online time, which will be uploaded onto Moodle by the end of the day. The assignments will provide fodder for the work we do together in class. Whereas we meet at a particular time in a particular place for our in-class meetings, you may complete the online work at any time before the stated deadline for an assignment. Thus, if you want to do your online work on the weekend, you can do that! If you want to do it on Monday evening, you can do that too! However, in light of the latitude you have, I will be extra stringent when it comes to accepting late assignments.

Caveat Emptor!

Comedians are some of the fiercest defenders of the First Amendment, and indeed proclaim the comedic space as a privileged zone for all manner of speech and opinions. It is this declaration of freedom that makes comedy so powerful and dangerous. As a result, in the AV clips we will be watching there will, on occasion, be explicit language. There may also be views or opinions expressed that are personally offensive or triggering—even couched within texts that express views with which you other might agree.

Course Goals

- Understand fundamental terms, concepts and theories in Humor Studies
- Explore relationships between gender, sexuality, race, and humor in the practice of comedy/humor, and the history of comedy/humor
- Interrogate the social, cultural, psychological, and political effects of humor
- Evaluate humor's capacity as a tool for activism and resistance
- Wrestle with ambiguity in understanding the intent and effects of particular pieces of comedy
- Account for the 'meaning' of particular works, recognizing the varied responses they provoke
- Analyze the factors that shape the content and contour of contemporary comedy in the U.S., including history, social structures, political economy
- Critically and reflexively analyze humor and responses of humor

Readings

There are no readings to purchase. All of the readings are available either as ebooks through the UMass library catalog or through Library Course Reserve Materials (linked through Moodle). There is a lot of reading; however, it is essential that you complete the readings, as online work and in-class discussions depend on everyone having done the work. Please budget your time accordingly.

Although there are no readings to purchase, you will need access to Netflix in October and November. You can purchase a membership for just those months and cancel it once December rolls around. If you can access Netflix by other means...I leave that up to you.

Assignments and Evaluative Criteria

Online Participation: 55%

In-Class Participation: 20%

Media Analysis: 20%

Comedian Interview: 5%

This course prioritizes consistent engagement with course materials throughout the semester. Thus, as you will note, the majority of your grade comes from your participation online and in-class. Online participation will be adjudicated by your timely and effective completion of weekly online assignments. In-class participation will be assessed by your consistent

attendance and informed participation in large and small group discussions, as well as completion of in-class writing assignments.

You have only two assignments to be completed outside of class. Their deadlines fall in mid- to late-November, so please budget your time accordingly.

1. **Media Analysis:** For this assignment, you will work in pairs; you will each receive the same grade. I will assign you to pairs by Wednesday, September 18. Together, you will select one of the stand-up performances listed below and prepare a 6-page double spaced (1-inch margin, 12-point font) paper. Your paper will focus on female-presenting comedians. In your assignment, you will describe both the form and the content of the text, and consider how it conveys political messages, explicitly and implicitly. Here, it is important to consider issues of representation, framing, delivery, substance, emotive force, etc... and its impact upon you as an audience member. You should also do a bit of research on the performer and his/her/their background. Doing this as a pair assignment allows you to take stock of disagreements you may have about the performance—i.e. whether one person thought it was feminist or not, whether one person thought it was funny/offensive/politically effective or not. This will allow you to employ some of the work on “audiencing” that we will be doing. Some of these are available through Netflix; many are available through Course Library Reserves. If you have difficulties accessing these titles, please be in touch with me as soon as possible. If you have a performer in mind who is not on this list, but would be interested in analyzing, please be in touch as soon as possible. The Media Analysis is due Friday, November 15 at 11:50pm on Moodle.

Available titles:

- Wanda Sykes, “What Happened to Ms. Sykes” (2016)
- Wanda Sykes, “Ima Be Me” (2015)
- Jen Kirkman, “Just Keep Livin’” (2017)
- Jen Kirkman, “I’m Going to Die Alone (And I Feel Fine)” (Netflix, 2015)
- Maria Bamford, “The Special Special Special!” (2012)
- Chelsea Peretti, “One of the Greats” (Netflix, 2014)
- Amy Schumer, “The Leather Special” (Netflix, 2017)
- Amy Schumer, “Mostly Sex Stuff” (2012)
- Mo’Nique, “I Coulda Been Your Cellmate” (2007)
- Roseanne Barr Show (1987)
- Sarah Silverman, “Jesus is Magic” (2005)
- Aisha Tyler is Lit (2008)
- Anjelah Johnson, “Not Fancy” (2015)
- Sofía Niño de Rivera, “Exposed” (Netflix 2016; in Spanish with subtitles)
- Garfunkle and Oates, “Trying to be Special” (2016)
- Obvious Child (dir. Gillian Robespierre, 2014)
- Lynne Koplitz, “Hormonal Beast” (Netflix, 2017)
- The Incredible Jessica James (Netflix, 2017)

- Iliza Schlesinger, “Confirmed Kills” (Netflix, 2016)
- Cristela Alonzo, “Lower Classy” (Netflix, 2017)
- Margaret Cho, “PsyCho” (Netflix, 2015)
- Tig Notaro, “Boyish Girl Interrupted” (2016)
- Tiffany Haddish, “She Ready!” (Showtime; 2017)
- Ellen DeGeneres, “Relatable” (Netflix, 2018)

2. Comedian Interview: You will complete this assignment individually. You will make contact with a comedian--can be amateur (like a UMass Improvisor or Sketch performer) or a professional--via social media or other means and ask if you can interview them. We will workshop interview questions in class (but you are welcome to prepare questions, review them with me, and conduct interviews in advance of the assignment). The interview should consist of 10 questions max, and can be conducted via email, in person, over the phone/Skype/FaceTime; however, the interview should be submitted as a word document. The purpose of this activity is a) to get the experience of conducting an interview; b) to get a comedian’s perspective on many of the questions we’ve addressed academically; and c) to get insight into the process of creating comedy. The interview will be due by 11:59pm EST on Friday, November 29th on Moodle.

Number grades will be translated to the final letter grades using the scale shown below:

A	93-100%	C+	77-79%
A-	90-92%	C	73-76%
B+	87-89%	C-	70-72%
B	83-86%	D	60-69%
B-	80-82%	F	59% and below

Attendance Policy

More than two unexcused absences will result in the loss of half a grade. Every unexcused absence thereafter will result in an additional half grade deducted from your grade. If you know you cannot make it to class due to a legitimate conflict, illness, or emergency, please be in touch in advance of class, or within 24 hours of your absence. I will be taking attendance at each class meeting.

Seating Policy

As part of your participation grade, please sit in a different seat at every in-class meeting.

Electronics Policy

Laptops are allowed for note-taking and relevant course-related Internet work. Please refrain from using smartphones and tablets in class unless there is a legitimate rationale for their use.

Late Assignments

All assignments must be received by their due date.

Emails

I do not answer emails on the weekends. Do not expect answers on weekends.

Statement Regarding Pronouns

There is a long history of dialogue and activism around how we address one another, with respect to both names and pronouns. Students should be referred to by the name they prefer, and with the proper pronunciation, by faculty and other students. I will gladly honor your request to address you by the name you prefer and gender pronouns that correspond to your gender identity. Please advise me of your name's proper pronunciation, and any name or pronouns not reflected by the record in Spire early in the semester so that I may make appropriate changes to my records.

Policy concerning use of Course Materials

Course materials can be shared among classmates, roommates, friends and family. They cannot be shared on social media. Recording of class sessions is not allowed barring special permission; these recordings cannot be shared on social media.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Honesty Statement

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

	ONLINE	IN CLASS	Assignments, Deadlines, Information of Importance
		Wednesday, September 4 Introductions Position Paper 1	
What is comedy? What is humor?	Monday, September 9 <u>Before class, read:</u> Andrew Stott, <i>Comedy</i> (Routledge, 2005): 1-16 <u>During online time:</u> 1. Research and prepare definitions of the follow terms: *parody *satire *camp *farce Prepare a paragraph for each. 2. Find examples of each of these terms [can be written, audio, video] 3. Upload both your definitions and links to your film clips on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, September 9.	Wednesday, September 11 <u>Before class, read:</u> Eric Weitz, <i>Cambridge Introduction to Comedy</i> (Cambridge University Press, 2009): 1-19 <u>In class:</u> 1. Bring definitions and examples to class. 2. Working in small and large groups, we will create collective definitions to put on the class wiki 3. We will review and compile clips that you collected online	
What are the dominant theories of	Monday, September 16 <u>Before class, read:</u>	Wednesday, September 18 <u>Before class, read:</u>	*Monday, September 16: last day of Add/Drop

<p>humor?</p>	<p>John Morreall, <i>Comic Relief: A Comprehensive Philosophy of Humor</i> (Wiley Blackwell, 2009), pp. 1-39</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create definitions of the following theories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Superiority Theory *Incongruity Theory *Relief Theory *Relaxation Theory <p>Provide a paragraph for each.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Find examples to illustrate <u>each</u> of the theories listed above [can be written, video, audio] 3. Upload both your definitions and links to your film clips on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, September 16. 	<p>John Morreall, <i>Comic Relief: A Comprehensive Philosophy of Humor</i>, pp. 40-68</p> <p><u>During class time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring definitions and examples to class. 2. Working in small and large groups, we will create collective definitions to put on the class wiki 3. We will review and compile clips that you collected online 	<p>Receive pair assignments for Media Analysis</p>
<p>What are the political and ethical implications of humor?</p>	<p>Monday, September 23</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Paul Lewis, "What's So Funny about a Dead Terrorist?: Toward an Ethics of Humor for the Digital Age," in <i>A Decade of Dark Humor: How Comedy, Irony, and Satire Shaped Post-9/11 America</i>, edited by Ted Gornelios and Viveca Greene (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2011), 214-232 *Gary Spencer, "An analysis of JAP-baiting humor on the 	<p>Wednesday, September 25</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Raul Perez and Viveca S. Greene, "Debating rape jokes vs. rape culture: framing and counter-framing misogynistic comedy," <i>Social Semiotics</i> (2016): 1-18 *Roxane Gay, "Some Jokes are funnier than others," <i>Bad Feminist</i> (Harper Perennial, 2014), 177-182 	

	<p>college campus,” <i>Humor</i> 2-4 (1989): 329-348</p> <p><u>During Online time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research the following events/humor controversies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Danish cartoon or “Jyllands-Posten Muhammad cartoons” controversy B. Charlie Hebdo shootings C. Sony Pictures hack/The Interview <p>Provide a paragraph for each.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Upload both your definitions and links to your film clips on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, September 23. 	<p><u>In Class:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bring your research findings to class. 2. For discussion: What are the potential dangers of comedy? How can comedy serve as a tool of oppression? 3. Watch and analyze Norton and West debate 	
<p>What are the political and ethical implications of humor?</p>	<p>Monday, September 30</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Amber Day, <i>Satire and Dissent: Interventions in Contemporary Political Debate</i> (Bloomington; Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2011), 1-23</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find an example of satire--be it written or audio/visual. You may want to consider titles such as “The Daily Show,” “The Onion,” or “Reductress.” 2. Analyze your selected piece in light of Day’s argument about the effects of satire. Who do you suspect the intended audience to be? How does the satire work in the piece? What is the 	<p>Wednesday, October 2</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*C. Willett, & J. Willett, “The Seriously Erotic Politics of Laughter: Bitches, Whores and Other Fumerists,” in S. Crasnow & J. Waugh (Eds.), <i>Philosophical feminism and popular culture</i> (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013), 15-36</p> <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <p>*Bring your satire analysis to class.</p> <p>*For discussion: How can humor serve resistant, and specifically feminist ends? In what ways can humor and comedy serve positive political ends?</p> <p>*Analyze examples of</p>	

	<p>political perspective that frames the satire? What are its potential effects? How might people interpret this text? 2 pages maximum. Include a link to the piece in your analysis.</p> <p>3. Upload your analysis on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, September 30.</p>	<p>feminist attempts to take on “rape jokes”</p>	
<p>How and why is humor gendered?</p>	<p>Monday, October 7</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Christopher Hitchens, “Why Women Aren’t Funny,” <i>Vanity Fair</i> (January 2007)</p> <p>*Rebecca Krefting, “Laughter in the Final Instance: The Cultural Economy of Humor (Or why women aren’t perceived to be as funny as men),” <i>Laughing Stalk</i>, 140-156</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <p>1. Watch an episode of “Big Bang Theory,” with commercials. Take notes on what you notice about gender dynamics in the show--how are the characters represented, who gets to be funny, how--and about the gender dynamics of the advertisements.</p> <p>---OR---</p> <p>2. Watch an episode of a show of your choice on</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 9</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Linda Mizejewski, “Pretty/Funny women and Comedy’s Body Politics: Funniness, Prettiness, and Feminism,” <i>Pretty/Funny: Women Comedians and Body Politics</i> (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 1-26</p> <p>*Frances Gray, <i>Women and Laughter</i> (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1994), 1-15.</p> <p><u>In class:</u></p> <p>1. Bring notes from your online work for discussion.</p> <p>2. For discussion: What is the relationship between “prettiness” and funniness, and how has this shaped the contour of women’s participation in comedy?</p>	

	<p>Comedy Central and take note of the advertisements. What is being sold, and to whom (ostensibly)?</p> <p>3. Interview 5 people in your local environment. Ask them to name their top 4 favourite comedians. Make note of how many women they mention.</p> <p>3. Submit your notes--2-3 pages in total--on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, October 7.</p>	<p>How does money affect women's participation in comedy?</p>	
<p>How and why is humor gendered?</p>	<p>Monday, October 14</p> <p>NO CLASS</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 16</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*K. Rowe, "The Unruly Woman: Gender and the Genres of Laughter," in B. Arrighi, ed., <i>Understanding inequality: The intersection of race/ethnicity, class, and gender</i>, Second Edition (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), 261-276</p> <p>*Jesse David Fox, "Nicole Byer Demands You Laugh at Her Fat Jokes," <i>Vulture</i> (14 January 2019): https://www.vulture.com/2019/01/nicole-byer-standup-comedy-fat-jokes-good-one.html (available on Moodle)</p> <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <p>*Discuss the qualities of the "unruly woman"</p> <p>*Watch Nicole Byer's special, analyze, and discuss</p> <p>*How does the unruly woman unsettle the pretty/funny binary? Or does it?</p>	

		*Position Paper 2	
How and why is humor racialized?	<p>Monday, October 21</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Mel Watkins, <i>On the Real Side: A History of African American Comedy from Slavery to Chris Rock</i> (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), 1-35</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <p>*Watch <i>Ethnic Notions</i> (dir. Marlon Riggs, 1987) on Kanopy and take notes (no minimum or maximum for notes)</p> <p>*Submit notes on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, Oct 21</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 23</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Lawrence Levine, <i>Black Culture and Black Consciousness: Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977/2007), 298-366</p> <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <p>*Bring notes on Ethnic Notions to class for discussion</p> <p>*For discussion:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How has the history of racism in the US shaped comedy? 2. Can you find resonances of the legacy laid out by Ethnic Notions in contemporary humor? 3. How does racism affect or circumscribe the possibilities of performance for African American performers? 4. Why do you think that American comedy continues to be dominated by white performers? Where do you see greater minority representation? What do you think accounts for this? 	
How can we analyze comedy	<p>Monday, October 28</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p>	<p>Wednesday, October 30</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u> Watch Ali Wong's 'Hard Knock</p>	

<p>performances?</p>	<p>*Alice Raynor, "Creating the Audience: It's All in the Timing," in <i>The Laughing Stalk: Live Comedy and Its Audiences</i>, edited by Judy Batalion (Anderson, SC: Parlor Press, 2012), 28-39</p> <p>*Dustin Goltz, "Ironic Performativity: Amy Schumer's Big (White) Balls," <i>Text and Performance Quarterly</i> 35, no. 4 (2015): 266-285</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch Ali Wong's 'Hard Knock Wife' and take notes. Analyze the performance using the methods offered by Goltz. 2-3 pages max. 2. Submit your notes on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, October 28. 	<p>Wife' (Netflix 2018) and take notes</p> <p><u>In Class:</u></p> <p>*Bring notes on Schumer and Wong. We will discuss Goltz and Raynor's studies of audiences and "audience-ing", and your observations of the shows we watched.</p> <p>*To what degree is our response to humor/comedy conditioned by a) who we are? b) where we consume it? c) whether we watch it by ourselves or in a group, live or recorded? d) when we watch it?</p>	
<p>What is the connection between sexuality and humor?</p>	<p>Monday, November 4</p> <p><u>Before Class, Read:</u></p> <p>* Jennifer Reed, "Sexual Outlaws: Queer in a Funny Way," <i>Women's Studies</i> 40, no. 6 (2011): 762-777</p> <p>* Joanne Gilbert, "Lesbian Stand Up Comics and the Politics of Laughter," in <i>Women and Comedy</i>, edited by Peter Dickinson et al (Rowman and Littlefield, 2014), 185-196</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <p>*Watch episode of Broad City--"Fattest Asses"--and write a 2-page MAX discussion of how sexuality is addressed in the episode. 2-3 pages max. Post your</p>	<p>Wednesday, November 6</p> <p>NO CLASS</p>	

	discussion on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, November 4		
	Monday, November 11 NO CLASS	Wednesday, November 13 NO CLASS	Media Analysis DUE Friday, November 15 at 11:59pm ON MOODLE
How can humor serve as a vehicle for resistant politics?	<p>Monday, November 18</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Naomi Zack, "Black Female Crossover Comedy: Freedom, Liberty, and Minstrelsy," in S. Crasnow & J. Waugh, eds., <i>Philosophical feminism and popular culture</i> (Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2013), 37-50.</p> <p>*Jessyka Finley, "Raunch and Redress: Interrogating Pleasure in Black Women's Stand-Up Comedy," <i>Journal of Popular Culture</i> 49, no. 4 (2016): 780-798</p> <p>*Check Out: Sisters of Comedy at https://www.agundaokay.com</p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <p>*Write a debate between Zack and Finley on the following topic: Can humor serve as a tool for anti-racist activism? 2-3 pages max.</p> <p>*Post your debate on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, November 18.</p>	<p>Wednesday, November 20</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>*Rebecca Krefting, "Margaret Cho's Army: 'We are the Baddest Motherfuckers on the Block,'" in <i>Hysterical! Women in American Comedy</i>, edited by Linda Mizejewski and Victoria Sturtevant (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017), 273-302</p> <p><u>In class:</u></p> <p>*review debate</p> <p>*How has comedy been used to convey radical messages?</p> <p>*What are the constraints placed on resistant comedy by a) history, b) the marketplace, c) persistent stereotypes?</p> <p>*Workshop comedian interview questions</p> <p>*watch: an episode of "Black Lady Sketch Show"</p>	
THANKS-	Monday, November 25	Wednesday, November 27	Comedian interview DUE

<p>GIVING</p>	<p>NO CLASS</p>	<p>NO CLASS</p>	<p>Friday, November 29 at 11:59pm ON MOODLE</p>
<p>What is the connection between humor and activism?</p>	<p>Monday, December 2</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u> *Marjolein 't Hart, "Humor and Social Protest: An Introduction," in <i>Humor and Social Protest</i>, edited by Marjolein 't Hart and Dennis Bos (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-20 *Krista Cowman, "Doing Something Silly: The Uses of Humour by the Women's Social and Political Union, 1903-1914," in <i>Humor and Social Protest</i>, pp. 259-274</p> <p><u>During online time:</u> *Research the following groups, individuals, and events: a. Guerrilla Girls B. Lesbian Avengers C. Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence D. Florynce Kennedy E. Act Up F. Miss America Pageant protests of 1968 One paragraph for each group. *How did each of these groups use humor? *Post your research findings on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, December 2.</p>	<p>Wednesday, December 4</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u> *Sara Warner, <i>Acts of Gaiety: LGBT Performance and the Politics of Pleasure</i> (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2012), 1-30</p> <p><u>In Class:</u> *Bring notes on activist groups to class. We will collectively prepare descriptions for wiki in class. *For discussion: In what ways can humor be a tool for activists? In what ways can it backfire?</p>	

<p>Pasts and Futures</p>	<p>Monday, December 9</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u> Watch <i>Why We Laugh</i></p> <p><u>During online time:</u></p> <p>1. Research 3 pathbreaking performers. In addition to providing biographical background, address the ways in which each performer was pathbreaking. Provide an example of their work, if possible.</p> <p>i. For people with last name A-J, research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Moms Mabley *Phyllis Diller *Joan Rivers <p>ii. For people with last name K-S, research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Robin Tyler *Elayne Boosler *Whoopi Goldberg <p>iii. For people with last name T-Z, research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Ellen DeGeneres *Paula Poundstone *Janeane Garofolo <p>2. Post your research findings (2 paragraphs per performer, plus link to example of work) on Moodle by 11:59pm EST on Monday, December 2.</p>	<p>Wednesday, December 11</p> <p><u>Before class, read:</u></p> <p>Nothing to read. Find a new piece of comedy that you think represents the cutting edge of feminist humor/comedy, especially intersectional humor/comedy. Be ready to share with the class.</p> <p><u>In class:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Bring notes on pioneering comedians *show and tell regarding future developments *final thoughts? *Position Paper 3 	
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