

American Studies 430  
American Humor  
M - Th: 3:30 - 4:50  
GHH 108  
Roger Williams University  
Fall Semester, 2010

Michael R. H. Swanson, Ph. D.  
Office: GHH 215  
Hours: M, T, W, Th, F: 11:00 - 12:00  
Or By Appointment  
Phone: 254 - 3230  
Email: amst430humor@gmail.com

## Week of November 8, 2010

For *Monday, November 8*

### Read, in *Boskin*

*Why are These Women Laughing? The Power and Politics of Women's Humor*  
(Susan L. Bunkers) pp. 159 - 171

The issue here is whether a woman's sense of humor is different from a man's, or, as some men would argue, whether women have any sense of humor at all. Author Bunkers argues that yes, women do have senses of humor, perhaps several different senses of humor.

Be sure you are able to distinguish between *self-deprecating humor* and *Sarcasm*, as well as the different situations which call these senses of humor into play. Read the poetry carefully, especially Mistress Anne Bradstreet, New England's first published poet. You'll see a parallel, I hope, with the piece by Edna St. Vincent Millay a page or two following.

I've located some Loretta Lynne for you to watch. You'll find it on the class website, along with the full lyrics to some of the songs presented. We'll see if the men in the class react differently from the women.

You'll also find some famous works of Dorothy Parker. Choose one you like, and come prepared to read it in class.

For *Thursday, November 11*

**Happy Armistice Day!**

Read, in *Baker*, *A Perplexing Question* (Fanny Flagg) pp. 175-177  
*Fate Keeps on Happening* (Anita Loos) pp. 177-184  
*Stop Ironing the Diapers* (Barbara Ehrenreich) pp. 296 - 299

As you read these three. I want you to notice if you laugh out loud (no fair trying not to do it). If you do, for which story and about what? Do these three pieces fit into Susan Bunker's analysis at all? If so, how?