

Lightning Talks 9/17

See schedule at the end of this announcement for times/rooms

Dr. Karla Armbruster (4:00-4:20 and 5:15-5:35pm)

Title: Dog Stories, Domestication, and Our Feral Future.

Description: As the first domesticated animal and the species often seen as closest to human beings, the dog occupies a conceptual border zone between nature and culture. Thus, dogs--and the stories we tell about them--tap into all of our many complex feelings about our relationship with other animals and the rest of nature. As we face the crises of climate change and the sixth mass extinction, what can dog stories tell us about how we've arrived at this moment — and how we might find a different way forward?

In this presentation I will answer this question by discussing the ways that some of our most beloved dog stories (*Old Yeller*, *The Call of the Wild*) represent and reinforce the value system that has fueled the human conquest and domestication of nature. Ultimately, I will suggest that perhaps it's time we look to other stories, such as Eva Hornung's novel *Dog Boy*, for models of how we might thrive along with other species in the future, even in the face of all the ways we've altered the planet.

Bio: Karla Armbruster is a professor in the English Department at Webster University, where she teaches classes on U.S. and environmental literature as well as the course on human-animal transformations in literature in which she includes Eva Hornung's novel *Dog Boy*. Her publications include two co-edited volumes (*Beyond Nature Writing: Expanding the Boundaries of Ecocriticism* and *The Bioregional Imagination: Literature, Ecology, and Place*) and various ecocritical and animal studies-related essays (including several on dogs in literature). Her first serious relationship with a dog began at the age of three, when her parents gave her a beagle puppy (whom she named Lassie) to keep her from feeling neglected when her younger sister was born. Since that time, she has always lived with at least one and up to five dogs, and currently resides in Webster Groves, Missouri, with her husband Pete, daughters Lila and Lulu, dogs Belle, Mr. Miggy, and Argo, and cats Olive, Jacey, and Regan. She is also very good friends with a retired police horse named Red, who (along with the rest of her herd) has delightfully expanded Karla's multi-species community in the past decade or so.

Dr. Anne Geraghty-Rathert (4:25-4:45 and 5:40-6:00pm)

Title: Wrongful Convictions of Women: The WILLOW Project

Bio: When it comes to proving their innocence after wrongful conviction, women face unique challenges. Evidence in their legal cases often differs greatly from that of wrongfully convicted men, and yet those differences are rarely acknowledged and remedied through the legal system. The female prison population has grown at more than twice the rate of the male prison population with arguably wrongfully convicted people in both groups, and yet women are often left out of conversations and advocacy which could correct these injustices.

The WILLOW Project is a nonprofit organization that provides legal assistance to wrongfully convicted women in prison. WILLOW is an acronym for “Women Initiate Legal Lifelines to Other Women.” Students and board members aim to improve the lives of society’s forgotten women: women who cannot fully access the justice system to prove their innocence due to poverty, oppression, exploitation, violence and other injustices. WILLOW Project staff members and Webster University student interns provide advocacy toward achieving justice; we strive to empower women by providing a legal voice at no cost and by encouraging lasting change.

Bio: Anne Geraghty-Rathert is a Professor in the Department of Law, Crime and Social Justice at Webster University in St. Louis, Missouri. She teaches courses in Legal Studies, and also serves on the Executive Committee and teaches in the Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies program.

In addition to teaching full time, Anne is an attorney in private practice. Her primary areas of practice and research deal with legal issues arising out of violence against women, including orders of protection, clemency, and commutation. Anne is the director of and attorney for The WILLOW Project, where she represents wrongfully convicted female clients, all of whom have lengthy sentences in prison.

Dr. Shannon Kispert (4:00-4:20 and 4:50-5:10pm)

Title: Smoking and Bladder Cancer: Tobacco, Carcinogens and Vape.....Oh My!

Description: Despite efforts to minimize cigarette smoking, 40 million Americans continue to smoke and thus have an increased risk of disease progression, recurrence, and mortality from bladder cancer. Electronic cigarette use, which has boomed in popularity as an alternative to cigarette smoking, lacks appropriate safety data and has been deemed a dubious alternative. This talk will explore the effects of smoking on the bladder and focus on undergraduate student involvement in benchside projects.

Bio: Dr. Shannon Kispert earned her B.S. in Biological Science from The University of Tulsa and her Ph.D. in Pathology at Saint Louis University School of Medicine. Her research interests include the investigation of cigarette smoking and E-cigarettes on breast and bladder cancer development and progression. Her true passion is education, and she has experience teaching at the undergraduate, graduate, and medical school level. She currently teaches anatomy and physiology in the biological sciences department and advises the biology honor society (TriBeta) as well as the Webster University PreMedical Society (WUPMS). In her free time, she enjoys spending time outside with her husband and toddler, all things coffee, and dance.

Dr. Warren Rosenblum (4:25-4:45 and 5:15-5:35pm)

Title: Truth, Lies, and Empathy in History

Description: A story can be authentic and true and yet historically misleading. Consider the suffering of young German soldiers in World War II or the struggles of poor white farmers in the United States who pushed deeper and deeper into “Indian country.” The challenge for the historian is to acknowledge individual pain and hardship, while staying focused on larger questions of interpretation: how do stories properly inform our understanding of the past? This talk will consider examples of dramatic and true

stories and the difficulties of integrating them into historical interpretations. I will argue that empathy with the “villains and losers” in history is essential to a mature understanding of the world and learning to engage democratically with people of diverse viewpoints.

Bio: Warren Rosenblum is professor of History at Webster University. He has published widely on topics in modern European history and was a Fulbright Research and Teaching Fellow in Belgium for 2020-2021.

Dr. Linda Woolf (4:50-5:10 and 5:40-6:00pm)

Title: Meet Me in Saint Louis: Eugenics at the Fair

Brief Description: In 1904, the Louisiana Purchase Exposition, colloquially referred to as the Saint Louis World’s Fair, was a celebration of modernity highlighting advances across human endeavors such as industry, technology, the arts, agriculture, and science. Fair attendees could examine marvels such as the wireless telephone, 140 new varieties of automobiles, x-ray machines, and infant incubators. Plaster palaces crisscrossed the 1200-acre site featuring exhibits of modern wonders, but the Fair also hosted disturbing outdoor “living exhibits” featuring indigenous populations from around the globe. Visitors could attend scholarly talks given as part of the Congress of Arts and Science, which sadly were awash in eugenic ideologies. Home to the 1904 Olympics (White only), the Fair hosted a "Special Olympics" or "Anthropology Days" designed to include indigenous participants but with the goal of highlighting White racial superiority. In this talk, we will look beneath the wondrous side of the Fair and catch a glimpse of its disturbing eugenics roots.

Bio: Dr. Linda M. Woolf is a Professor of Psychology and teaches a range of courses concerning the Holocaust, genocide, human rights, ethics, and political/peace psychology. Dr. Woolf won the American Psychological Foundation’s 2020 Charles L. Brewer Distinguished Teaching of Psychology Award, the William T. Kemper Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Emerson Electric Excellence in Teaching Award, and several awards from the Society for the Teaching of Psychology. Recent articles, book chapters, and presentations focus on social justice, human rights, ethics, hate groups, torture, LGBTQ+ and women’s rights, and the psychosocial roots of genocide and terrorism. Dr. Woolf currently serves as President-Elect of the Society for the Teaching of Psychology (Division 2, APA). She is a member of the APA Committee on International Relations in Psychology, APA Ethics Code Revision Task Force, and serves on the Board of the Institute for the Study of Genocide. She graduated from Webster in 1979 with a degree in Psychology and recently completed a second Master's degree in International Relations. Twice a Gorlok!

Schedule

Time (9/17)	EAB 234	EAB 236	EAB 238	EAB 240
4:00-4:20	Armbruster		Kispert	
4:25-4:45		Geraghty- Rathert		Rosenblum
4:50-5:10	Kispert		Woolf	
5:15-5:35		Rosenblum		Armbruster
5:40-6:00	Woolf		Geraghty- Rathert	