

Newsroom

September 6, 2013

Georgia Southern University

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Georgia Southern University

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Irish Scholar to speak at Georgia Southern

SEPTEMBER 6, 2013

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Georgia Southern University's Center for Irish Studies presents "Where Scotland Met Ireland: Ulster Poetry of the Romantic Period," a lecture by Jennifer Orr, Ph.D., of the University of Oxford and University of Dublin, on Monday, Sept. 9, at 7 p.m. in the Carol A. Carter Recital Hall in the Foy Building. The lecture is free and open to everyone.

Orr's lecture centers on Ulster-Scot poets and the historical events surrounding the group's formation. "In the early 1600s, Ireland's northernmost province of Ulster lay ravaged by the Elizabethan Wars," said Howard Keeley, Ph.D., director of the Center. "Mindful of an earlier model – called the Hamilton-Montgomery Settlement – King James I decided to settle Ulster lands confiscated from the Irish with British Protestants. This Plantation of Ulster constitutes one of the most significant ethnic, cultural and religious intersections in world history. During the next century, descendants of the planters began a Great Migration to the eastern seaboard of North America, including Georgia, becoming a major presence in Appalachia."

Keeley added that for many of the Ulster-Scots who remained in Ireland, the American and French Revolutions offered a new model for conceiving of nationhood and led to the creation of the Society of United Irishmen in 1791. "The group was dedicated to enfolding all residents of Ireland into a sovereign republic free of the British crown," said Keeley. "But not everyone in Ireland supported the United Irish movement, which would spearhead an armed and extremely bloody rebellion over many months in 1798."

"In this dynamic environment, a group of County Antrim Ulster-Scots poets fostered links to United Irish leaders in their county's principal city, Belfast," explained Keeley. "Determined to make the most of the radical buzz then affecting that industrial and mercantile port, the coterie championed a reinvigorated Irish culture based on the songs and poetry of ordinary people, such as linen weavers. The group sought to highlight its own spoken tongue of Ulster-Scots, derived from the Scots dialect of their 17th Century settler forebears: the dialect we associate with Scotland's most renowned poet, Robert Burns (1759-1796). Their ambition was to make Ulster famous, just as Burns had advanced the land, sounds and identity of Scotland."

Keeley believes this lecture by a world-class scholar will prove compelling to anyone interested in Ireland or Scotland, in multiculturalism or ethno-political history or in popular poetry or linguistics.

Orr received her doctorate in English literature from the University of Glasgow and went on to teach poetry at Christ Church, one of the largest constituent colleges of the University of Oxford. In addition to her Oxford appointment, Orr is currently completing a year as the Irish Research Council's Fellow in English at the University of Dublin-Trinity College. Under contract to be published by Cambridge University Press, her IRC-funded project Ulster Romantic Belief and Practice considers poetry and other forms of intellectual activity in Ulster, the northernmost of Ireland's four provinces, during the 1790-1820 phase of the Romantic period. Last year, the respected Irish publisher Four Courts Press released *The Correspondence of Samuel Thomson (1766-1816)*, edited by Orr. Presently, Orr will take up a tenured professorship at Newcastle University, a research-intensive institution in the north of England.

The Center for Irish Studies is housed in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences. CLASS, the University's College of the Creative Mind, prepares students to achieve academic excellence, develop their analytical skills, enhance their creativity, and embrace their responsibilities as citizens of their communities, their nations, and the world.

Georgia Southern University, a Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers 125 degree programs serving more than 20,000 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered approach to education. Visit: www.georgiasouthern.edu.

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The Garden of the Coastal Plain to Host Author Janisse Ray

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The Lunch and Learn series returns to the Garden of the Coastal Plain at Georgia Southern University on Thursday, Sept. 26 from noon until 1 p.m. at the Garden's Heritage Pavilion, 1505 Bland Avenue, with a presentation on seeds, food and farming from award-winning author Janisse Ray.

Seeds are the source of the world's food staples including wheat, corn and rice. Experts believe that of the thousands of seed varieties available at the turn of 20th century, 94 percent have been lost forever. Ray will discuss seed saving, healthy food and farming and the inspiring efforts to address one of the planet's most crucial challenges in her presentation titled "The Future of Food: Heirlooms of the Past and the Art of Seed Saving."



The Garden of the Coastal Plain welcomes author Janisse Ray on Sept. 26.

Ray's talk will be the first of the Garden of the Coastal Plain's four-lecture Lunch and Learn series. The event includes a lunch especially paired with the topic by food advocate and Chef Kevin Case of Georgia Southern Catering. Lunch and Learn is a fundraiser for the Garden, which must raise much of its operating support.

The cost is \$20, and reservations are required. Call (912) 871-1149 for reservations. The talk without lunch is free for Georgia Southern students with ID. Ray's books will be available for purchase.

Ray, born in Baxley, Ga., is a writer, naturalist and activist as well as a seed saver, seed exchanger and seed-banker. She is the author of several books, including *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, a *New York Times* Notable book. She won a Southeastern Booksellers Award for Nonfiction, an American Book Award, the Southern Environmental Law Center Award for Outstanding Writing and a Southern Book Critics Circle Award. She attempts to live a simple, sustainable life on a farm in south Georgia.

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