KATHERINE GILBERT

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Katherine Gilbert is Associate Professor of English in the Department of Languages and Literature at Drury University. She teaches British Literature, Women Writers, as well as courses on the Gothic and Law and Literature. She directs the Humanities & Ethics Center at Drury University and co-organizes the annual Missouri Humanities Symposium. Her recent publications center on law and literature in the Victorian period, women and the law, and essays on Rose O’Neill. She received her M.A. from the University of Virginia and her Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin.

AVAILABLE PRESENTATIONS

ROSE O’NEILL: ARTIST, WRITER, AND SUFFRAGIST

While Rose O’Neill is most famous for her Kewpie dolls, which she described as “little round fairies” who could “teach people to be merry and kind at the same time,” Kewpie dolls represent only one portion of the breadth and depth of her art, art that was exhibited in both New York and Paris. Over the course of her life, O’Neill published illustrations for over 600 national corporations and magazines. She became the highest-paid illustrator in her time. She created no less than 5500 drawings, including some of the most famous suffragist posters. She was also a sculptor, painter, and author of novels, children’s stories, and a wealth of still unpublished journals. She also produced countless drawings in support of the suffragist movement and marched for women’s right to vote. This talk discusses her art, writing, and extraordinary life as a cutting-edge figure who moved between the Ozarks, the island of Capri in Italy, Greenwich Village in New York, and, in her final years, the Ozarks. The talk highlights O’Neill’s love of the Ozarks, and the ways that the landscape shaped her art, and her ”sweet monsters” series in particular.

21ST CENTURY MISSOURI GOTHIC: THE NOVELS AND FILMS OF GILLIAN FLYNN

Gillian Flynn’s Sharp Objects (2006), Dark Places (2009), and Gone Girl (2012), have been best-sellers as well as wildly popular films or series in the past two decades. Flynn, a native of Kansas City, Missouri, sets her gothic thrillers in rural Missouri and Kansas. Sharp Objects takes place in the fictional southern Missouri town of Wind Gap, and Gone Girl is largely set in North Carthage, Missouri. In all three works, Flynn takes the Gothic novel, a genre going back to the eighteenth century in Europe, and mixes it with the Southern gothic of nineteenth-century American writers like Edgar Allen Poe. She then gives it her own 21st century Missouri twist to create what I call in my talk 21st Century Missouri Gothic. Flynn draws on the landscape and history of Missouri and Kansas to frame families generational secrets. She layers a rugged Missouri over a Gothic underbelly, surprising and thrilling readers and viewers with unexpected plot twists. This talk frames Flynn’s work in the cultural context for the earliest Gothic works and discusses how Flynn’s hits make the old come newly alive—and specifically Missourian.

SPEAKER CONTACT INFORMATION

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