

2023 International Relations Lecture Series

January 11, 2023

International Energy Markets, in Flux

Speaker: Dr. Lea-Rachel Kosnik

Lea-Rachel Kosnik is a Professor of Economics at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She received her PhD from the University of California-Los Angeles after having spent a year as a Fulbright Scholar in Ankara, Turkey, studying hydroelectric power and renewable energy in the Middle East. Her active research agenda focuses on energy and environmental economics, including broad equity and environmental justice implications in these markets.

Global energy markets have had a wild past couple of years, with prices, production, and consumption patterns often exhibiting extreme volatility. Professor Kosnik will discuss historical and current trends in global energy patterns, including how political shocks such as the war in Ukraine has been affecting particular energy markets. She will offer policy prescriptions on possible ways to regulate energy markets in the future, in particular with an eye towards managing climate change and other global crises.

February 14, 2023

Afghan Refugees and their Resettlement in St. Louis: Focus on Education of Women

Speaker: Dr. Linda Lindsey

Dr. Lindsey recently retired as Senior Lecturer at Washington University and is Professor Emerita at Maryville University. She received her PHD in sociology from Case Western Reserve University and a later M.A. in education from St. Louis University. Her academic career is under a gender and intersectional umbrella, focusing on inequality, diversity, globalization, and health and society. Affiliation with the Asian Studies Development Program, a joint program of the East-West Center and University of Hawaii, Fulbright grants, and work with NGOS allowed seminars in China, India, Pakistan, Japan, and Jordan and has taken her to North and Sub-Saharan Africa. Recent publishing outlets include *Gender: Sociological Perspectives (7/e)*, co-edited *Women of Asia: Globalization, Development, and Gender Equity, Preventing Ethnic Conflict*, and *Sociology (3/e)*. "Retirement" offers time for writing, research, and opportunities to delve onto the gender and global issues that are personally meaningful in this uncertain era. With a lifetime of volunteerism, she works on behalf of immigrants, women and children, health, and political advocacy in the name of social justice.

What does it mean to be an Afghan refugee in St. Louis, especially for women? This presentation spotlights issues, challenges and resilience of Afghans as they resettled in St. Louis, and the specific issues faced by Muslim women caring for their families under the Russians, the Taliban, the Americans in Afghanistan, and now in the United States. Dr. Lindsey will offer a historical timeline of continuity and change amid unfolding crises in Afghanistan informed by her experiences in Pakistan during the Afghan exodus under the Russians in the 1980s, and

ongoing research and teaching on Afghan women to the present. She will share a portrait of an Afghan refugee family that both typifies and transcends obstacles to immigration as they navigate(d) the passage to resettlement. Although challenges are ongoing, this story speaks largely to the celebration of their successful journey to St. Louis as a welcoming community.

March 14, 2023

Relations among Taiwan, China and the United States

Speaker: Dr. Henry Rowold

Dr. Rowland is a retired Professor Emeritus of international research of the Institute of Mission Studies at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. Before joining the faculty of Concordia Seminary, Dr. Rowold went to Taiwan in 1965 with a mandate to learn the culture and language and to aid the Christian church where possible. Several decades later, he went to Hong Kong for more convenient access to the China mainland. Until 2018, he continued to visit Taiwan. He speaks both Mandarin Chinese and Taiwanese (Minnan). In his IRLS talk, he will share his perspective on the history of China, and Taiwan and the US involvement with these countries.

The world has no shortage of hot spots of festering tension: Ukraine, North and South Korea, Ethiopia and Eritrea, the Sudan, Papua New Guinea, to mention just a few. High on that list would also be the simmering tension between the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. What is striking about this tension is the eerie similarity with the struggle in Ukraine: an immensely larger imperial nation seeking to assimilate a smaller, resistant nation.

Both the PRC and Taiwan have grown from poverty during the last century, and both have become major economic and technological powers. China has the world's largest population, has sent a person to the moon, has hosted the Olympics, and is vying with the USA to be the largest economic and military power. Taiwan, with a population of 24 million, has an economy rated the world's 8th to 10th largest, and serves as the world's "chip" center.

April 11, 2023

A Truly Global Problem: Coping with Climate Change

Speaker: Dr. Marlene Katz

Dr. Katz is an educator and speaker on environmental problems. She received her M.S. and Ph.D in biochemistry from the University of Chicago. In addition to working as a research chemist at the Southern Research Institute, she taught biology, chemistry, biochemistry and environmental science for 42 years at several community colleges, universities and liberal arts institutions. Dr. Katz is currently a facilitator at Washington University's Osher Lifelong Learning Center in addition to serving as a speaker for the St. Louis Zoo, Missouri Botanical Garden and various church groups and garden clubs.

The long-lasting heat waves as well as the extreme drought and flooding we are seeing worldwide make even the most resistant of us aware that warming of the earth's atmosphere will affect human lives in all parts of the globe. Changes are occurring that are environmental,

economic, and societal. On our planet everything is connected to everything else. This makes dealing with climate change more difficult while it also makes the impact of corrective changes more dramatic. We will have to change our way of life in response to the warming of our atmosphere. As some are turning away from denial, they are overwhelmed by feeling waves of panic and powerlessness about their situation. They ask, “How bad will it get? How will it affect me and my family? What can be done now to make things less bad for me and my family (or for humankind)?”

This presentation will have the following focuses:

1. Showing how human ingenuity is developing solutions to the problems that climate change brings (removing excess carbon from the atmosphere, switching to renewable energy sources, protecting coastal areas, etc.)
2. Emphasizing the importance of recognizing both the difficulties of learning to cooperate on a global scale and the necessity for this kind of action. The ability to think globally is perhaps the major challenge facing humanity at this time of crisis.
3. Challenging the listener to work on ideas that can be connected to actions on complex existing problems that are being exacerbated by global warming, such as immigration.