

35<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CARL A. MELLBY LECTURE SERIES

# *Insights from an Ecologist's Life*



TUESDAY / APRIL 10  
7:30 P.M. / VIKING THEATER

## **KATHLEEN SHEA**

Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies  
Curator of the St. Olaf Natural Lands

## KATHLEEN SHEA



Kathleen Shea earned her B.A. in biology from Grinnell College, her M.A. in biology from Washington University, and her Ph.D. in environmental, population and organismic biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder. In 1985 she joined the St. Olaf faculty, teaching biology and also teaching in the Paracollege, where she joined an interdisciplinary group of faculty preparing to create the environmental studies program. This nascent program was the beginning of our current Environmental Studies Department.

Shea's professional work in plant ecology examines how environmental variation influences plant growth and reproduction. She teaches ecology-related courses in both the biology and environmental studies departments. Ecology is a core course for the biology major and her Field Ecology course offers a more advanced look at how ecology is studied. She helped develop the Introduction to Environmental Studies, Conservation Biology, and two Tropical Ecology courses. As Curator of the Natural Lands since 2009, she oversees the management of 350 acres of natural habitat and works with farmers to use sustainable agricultural practices on St. Olaf farmland.

Offering students study abroad and field experiences has long been a priority, leading Shea to develop an Interim program to study ecology, conservation, and sustainable land use in Costa Rica. She led a similar program in Ecuador and was a field supervisor for the St. Olaf Environmental Studies in Australia program. Her current research focuses on collaborative projects with students on the St. Olaf Natural Lands, with projects ranging from analyzing tree growth patterns in forest restoration areas to studying the effects of burning and restoration on prairie soil health and plant biodiversity. She follows the model of doing research with students during the summer, often continuing into the academic year, and presenting the results of this research with the students at professional meetings. She has worked with more than 65 students on independent research projects.

Shea also has held a number of positions on campus, from chair of the Biology Department and director/chair of the Environmental Studies Department and concentration, to chair of the Faculty Development (Life) Committee, and vice-chair of the Curriculum Committee. Since 2010 she has been on the leadership team of the National Science Foundation-funded Ecological Research as Education Network. She has coauthored several publications showing how collaborative research at primarily undergraduate institutions can enhance ecology education and produce publishable research, and serves as an editor for the Ecological Society of America, EcoEd Digital Library, which promotes sharing of ideas for ecology education.

When not studying ecology, Shea can be found running, hiking, or playing with her granddaughter.

# CARL MELLBY



In *High on Manitou*, William C. Benson called Dr. Carl A. Mellby “the father of the social sciences.” In *History of St. Olaf College*, Joseph M. Shaw ’49 noted the following:

“Dr. Mellby has been regarded as the dean of St. Olaf’s teaching personnel, the prototype of the complete professor, competent, imaginative, congenial, and unaffected.

“His first interest was history, which he taught with phenomenal breadth and perception, lecturing in seemingly casual fashion on the cultural and social interactions of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and especially the modern history of Europe. Mellby also originated and taught the first courses in economics, sociology, political science, and history of art. He is credited with introducing one of the earliest marriage and family courses in the country. He was instrumental in starting the teacher placement bureau, and St. Olaf President John Kildahl in making arrangements to begin the honor system in examinations.

“At one time or another Mellby also taught Greek, German, French, religion, and philosophy. He was acting president for one year and vice president for two years. He wrote the 50th anniversary history of the college, articles for church papers, historical sketches, and numerous resolutions and tributes when the right word was needed for the occasion.”

The Faculty Life Committee of St. Olaf College acknowledges the accomplishments of Dr. Carl A. Mellby, professor and administrator, 1901–49, by sponsoring a lecture series in his name. With this, the Faculty Life Committee also honors his successors among both the junior and senior St. Olaf faculty by inviting them at regular intervals to reflect on the significance of their own scholarly work and on developments in their chosen academic fields.

**1983-84**

Lynn Steen, Mathematics

**1984-85**

Anne H. Groton, Classics  
Harold H. Ditmanson, Religion

**1985-86**

Reidar Dittmann, Art and Norwegian  
Devra Westover, Nursing

**1986-87**

Albert E. Finholt, Chemistry  
Jo Fraatz (Beld), Political Science

**1987-88**

Samiha Sidhom Peterson, Sociology  
Howard Hong, Philosophy

**1988-89**

Ted Johnson, Biology  
Carol Holly, English

**1989-90**

Robert L. Nichols, History  
Anantanand Rambachan, Religion

**1990-91**

Robert Jacobel, Physics  
Ann Wagner, Dance

**1991-92**

George C. Helling, Sociology  
Kathleen Fishbeck, Biology

**1992-93**

Valborg Tollefsrud, Nursing  
Gwen Barnes-Karol, Spanish

**1993-94**

J. Patrick Dale, Political Science  
John Maakestad, Art

**1994-95**

Anton Armstrong, Music  
Kristina Huber (MacPherson), Library

**1995-96**

Fred Stoutland, Philosophy  
Martha Wallace, Mathematics

**1996-97**

James May, Classics  
Olivia Frey, English

**1997-98**

Eric D. Weitz, History  
Wendy Allen, French

**1998-99**

Charles Huff, Psychology  
Alice Hanson, Music

**1999-2000**

Ed Langerak, Philosophy  
Mac Gimse, Art

**2000-01**

Eric S. Cole, Biology  
James J. Farrell, History

**2001-02**

Nancy Paddleford, Music  
Edmund Santurri, Religion and Philosophy

**2002-03**

Charles Taliaferro, Philosophy  
L. DeAne Lagerquist, Religion

**2003-04**

David Wee, English  
Amy Kolan, Physics

**2004-05**

Paul Humke, Mathematics  
Jolene Jacobson Barjasteh, French

**2005-06**

Steve Reece, Classics  
Gary Gisselman, Theatre

**2006-07**

Rich DuRocher, English  
David Schodt, Economics

**2007-08**

Robert Entenmann, Asian Studies and History  
Anne Walter, Biology

**2008-09**

Charles Wilson, Religion  
Andrea Een, Music

**2009-10**

Karen Peterson Wilson, Theater  
Paul Zorn, Mathematics

**2010-11**

Michael Leming, Sociology  
Katherine Tegtmeier Pak, Political Science  
and Asian Studies

**2011-12**

Wendell Arneson, Art  
Dave Van Wylen, Biology

**2012-13**

Jeanine Grenberg, Philosophy  
Dan Dressen, Music

**2013-14**

León Narváez, Romance Languages  
and Latin American Studies  
Bruce Nordstrom-Loeb, Sociology

**2014-15**

Rebecca Judge, Economics and  
Environmental Studies  
Mary Titus, English

**2015-16**

Matthew Richey, Mathematics, Statistics,  
and Computer Science  
Karen Cherewatuk, English

**2016-17**

David Booth, Religion  
Mary Griep, Art/Art History

**2017-18**

Diana Postlethwaite, English  
Kathleen Shea, Biology  
and Environmental Studies