

NEWS RELEASE

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KU PROFESSOR TO EXPLORE ANTIEVOLUTION CONTROVERSIES IN EDUCATION AT HALL CENTER LECTURE

LAWRENCE— KU Associate Professor of History Jeff Moran, author of the forthcoming *American Genesis: Antievolution Controversies from Scopes to Intelligent Design*, will speak at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 16, in the Commons at Spooner Hall. His lecture, "The Antievolution Controversies and American Culture," is part of the Hall Center for the Humanities' 2011-12 Humanities Lecture Series. The event is free and open to the public.

In 2002, Moran published *The Scopes Trial: A Brief History with Documents*, which was intended to be primarily an undergraduate textbook but won wider notice for its interpretation of the trial and its inquiry into hitherto unexamined aspects of the antievolution controversy.

His Humanities Lecture Series presentation will offer new information on the contentious debates surrounding evolution that have recently exploded in the public schools. These reforms have deep roots extending as far back as the Scopes Trial. Moran notes that he is most interested in the ways in which educational controversies embody and deepen existing tensions in American culture.

The role of science education, particularly evolution, remains a troubling center of Kansas state education policy. The 2004 Kansas Evolution Hearings, the resulting decision to include intelligent design in classrooms, and the subsequent repeal of this curriculum in 2007 splashed the Kansas State Board of Education across national headlines for years.

Yet the way science education is handled in public school curricula is far from resolved, both locally and nationally. Vigorous debate in politics, religion, and education rages on. Many states mandate simultaneous education in evolution and intelligent design, while others require only evolutionary biology be taught.

Moran holds a PhD in History from Harvard University, where he won the Organization of American Historians' Louis Peltzer Memorial Prize for the best article by a graduate student in American history. He taught at Brown University before joining the University of Kansas Department of History in 1998. Moran is best known for his work in two distinct fields: sex education and evolution.

Founded in 1947, the Humanities Lecture Series is the oldest continuing series at KU. More than 150 eminent scholars from around the world have participated in the program, including author Salman Rushdie, poet Gwendolyn Brooks and evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins. Recent speakers have included Henry Louis Gates Jr., Mary Oliver and T.R. Reid. Shortly after the program's inception, a lecture by one outstanding KU faculty member was added to the schedule. For information on other lectures in the 2011-2012 series, visit the Hall Center website.

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