

Université 
de Montréal



DÉPARTEMENT D'ÉTUDES ANGLAISES
&
THE J. W. MCCONNELL CHAIR IN AMERICAN STUDIES

PRESENT A LECTURE BY

MELBA CUDDY-KEANE

"Pre-Theory Narratives and Post-Theory Ethics"

Abstract: How can we determine what it is to live ethically after the wide-spread collapse of universals and essentialisms precipitated by post-structuralism and continental theory? Can the pre-theory narratives of the modernist era, with their uneasy blends of epistemological uncertainty and pressures toward responsibility and answerability, speak to us about this question as it plagues us today? My talk will pursue the possibilities, not of answers but for action, that lie in weak deontological claims, Theory of Mind, and a willingness to work in the "dirty conditions" of inclusive perception.

Melba Cuddy-Keane is Professor of English and a Northrop Frye Scholar at the University of Toronto, where she specializes in the areas of modernism, narratology, globalism/internationalism, and book history/print culture. Her recent publications include *Virginia Woolf, the Intellectual, and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge UP, 2003) and the Harcourt annotated edition of Woolf's *Between the Acts* (2008). Forth-coming publications include essays on anti/ante-beginnings, modernist globalism, narrative ethics, and Woolf and the public sphere. She is a former president of the International Virginia Woolf Society and current president of the Modernist Studies Association.

Friday, October 31 2008— 4:15 P.M.

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