

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Kyra Pearson, Ph.D

Associate Professor of Communication Studies, Loyola Marymount University



You've Found Your Voice, Now What?

As competition increases in the employment market and graduate program admissions, how can college students distinguish themselves in order to achieve their professional goals? Developing one's unique contribution to research or creative work can provide this mark of distinction. While finding one's voice can lead to personal advancement, it is crucial that we also use our voice to better the communities in which we live.

Dr. Kyra Pearson is an Associate Professor of Communication Studies at Loyola Marymount University. She received her B.A. in both American Studies and Rhetoric & Communication from the University of California, Davis, and her M.A. and Ph.D. in Communication Studies from the University of Iowa. Dr. Pearson's teaching and research explore the relationship between communication, civic life, and social change. Her areas of specialization are media studies and rhetoric—the theory and practice of public argument. She is especially interested in examining embodied rhetorics, sites where norms of speech and bodily conduct are transgressed in rather corporeal ways. These performances and the controversies they often incite can tell us a great deal about the norms that police the boundaries of personhood, nationhood, and public life. Her articles have been published in national and international journals in communication and cultural studies. She is currently writing a book manuscript on the embodied rhetorics of U.S. feminism (1968 to 2005) that explores the role of body politics in democratic public cultures.

Dr. Eric Strauss, Ph.D

Research Associate Professor of Biology, Director of Environmental Studies, and Director of Science for the Urban Ecology Institute at Boston College



The Frontier of Urban Ecology: The Challenge of Rejuvenating America's Cities

As the majority of the World's population become urban dwellers, our species faces enormous and novel challenges to our long term sustainability. Urban ecosystems are complex and dynamic landscapes that hold the potential for mitigating some of our most vexing environmental problems, such as climate change and resource depletion. Cities of the world can be part of the solution to a sustainable biosphere.

Dr. Eric Strauss is Research Associate Professor of Biology, Director of Environmental Studies, and Director of Science for the Urban Ecology Institute at Boston College. His research focuses on exploring urban ecosystems with an emphasis on how humans can alter and effectively manage sustainability. His work not only encompasses interdisciplinary and collaborative scientific scholarship with undergraduates but includes very strong community involvement ranging from city planning and management to educational outreach to Boston's K-12 community. His dynamism and vision of an urban landscape that can grow with and maintain ecosystems is infectious and he has everyone from schoolchildren in the inner city to urban planners to the academic community partaking in this stewardship approach.

With foci on behavioral and community ecology, his team conducts research in the Boston Metropolitan Area and the Sandy Neck Barrier Beach Complex on Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Utilizing methods that include mark-recapture studies, direct observation, radio-telemetry and bioacoustics, they are interested in elucidating the factors that influence the reproductive success and life history. Our study species include eastern coyotes (*Canis latrans*), white-tailed deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*), piping plovers (*Charadrius melodus*) and diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*).

The Urban Ecology Institute, the Urban Sciences Research & Learning Group and the Urban Ecology Collaborative are collaborative partners which work to promote the stewardship of healthy urban ecosystems by improving our knowledge of urban ecological function, and by engaging communities in the process of urban restoration and transformation. In addition, they are committed to creating authentic connections between the scholarship of original research and the teaching of high school and college science.