

Prof. Yoon Sun Lee, Wellesley College

Proxy Wars as a Method of Reading

Tuesday, March 28th, 2023

12:12-1.45 pm

Room 146 (Library Auditorium)

Abstract: This talk examines the historical circumstances of the rise of structuralism, focusing on the use of abstract models in literary theory as well as in the Third World. Roland Barthes's model of narrative, for example, finesses the distinction between atemporal matrix and temporal sequence, between structure and history, in ways that reflect policies pursued on the global stage.



Bio: Yoon Sun Lee's most recent book, *The Natural Laws of Plot: How Things Happen in Realist Novels*, has just been published by U Penn Press. She is the Anne Pierce Rogers Professor of English at Wellesley and the author of *Nationalism and Irony: Burke, Scott, Carlyle* (Oxford UP, 2004), and *Modern Minority: Asian American Literature and Everyday Life* (Oxford UP, 2013). Her essays have appeared in *PMLA*, *Representations*, *Novel: A Forum on Fiction*, *Studies in Romanticism*, *Keats-Shelley Journal*, *MLQ*, *ELH*, *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative Theory*, *The Cambridge Companion to the Postcolonial Novel*, the *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian American Literature*, and other journals and collections. She has also written for Public Books as well as The Rambling. She is currently co-editing an issue of *Representations*, "Proxy Wars," with Kent Puckett, and is beginning a larger project on race, type, and literary representation. She is the second vice-president of the International Society for the Study of Narrative (due to be president in 2024), chair of the MLA Prose Fiction Forum, and co-convenor of the Novel Theory Seminar at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard.