

Center for Northern Studies

Spring 2001 Lecture Series

March 14, Gail Osherenko

Reindeer Herders & Cultural Resistance:

A View From Northwest Siberia

The Nenets, with a population of 35,000, are an indigenous reindeer herding culture which spreads across the northern coast of Eurasia from the Komi Republic to the Taimyr Peninsula. Nenets now face new threats from radical changes in Russia's economic and political system, climate change, and industrial development, as well as potential development of the vast oil and gas reserves which underlie their traditional pasturelands. The core area of the reindeer herding culture on the Yamal Peninsula is the focus of *Siberian Survival*, a recent book co-written by Gail Osherenko and Andrei Golovnev. In this slide-illustrated lecture, Osherenko will explore the reasons for the resilience of this Northwest Siberian group. A graduate of the University of California Law School and former CNS faculty member, Gail Osherenko is now a Senior Fellow of the Institute of Arctic Studies at Dartmouth College, and she has worked with a variety of social scientists on issues of resource management, environmental protection and indigenous rights.

April 11, Bill Osgood

To War, With Skis & Ice-Axe

Polar Bill Osgood has been interested in snow and in the North from his boyhood in southern New Hampshire to his Army training for the Tenth Mountain Division to books on skiing and snowshoeing and a stint as librarian at the Center for Northern Studies. Now retired, Osgood will talk about the training the US Army invented for its mountain troops in World War II and about his service in the Italian Alps in the last days of the war.

April 18, Ludger Müller-Wille

Participatory Action Research in Northernmost Europe:

Issues Around Reindeer & Mountain Birch Utilization

Ludger Müller-Wille, now in the Geography Department of McGill University, did his doctoral work (Münster 1971) on Sámi-Finnish relations in a small community in Sápmi, and, since the 1970s, has completed research in northern regions in Europe and North America among Sámi, Finns, Dene, Inuit and Naskapi. Please join us as Dr. Müller-Wille describes some of his most recent research concerning the environmental, socio-economic, and cultural issues surrounding the utilization of local resources, such as reindeer, in Finnish and Norwegian Sápmi. Dr. Müller-Wille will discuss his research strategies and their application as well as issues of sustainable development, competition in resource development, aboriginal rights and empowerment.

April 25, Matthew Pelkki

Saving the Forests of Western Siberia from Ecological Disaster

The forests of western Siberia lie in the Ob River basin, just east of the Ural Mountains in the northwest corner of Asia. This region is only slightly smaller than the Amazon River basin and is a forest-bog complex which contains huge deposits of valuable minerals and fossil fuels. The exploration of these mineral resources places the ecosystems of western Siberia in great jeopardy, with potentially serious consequences for global ecosystem health. Please join us as Dr. Matthew Pelkki describes the research efforts that are underway to identify the extent of the ecological damage, to minimize the impact of development, and to restore forest ecosystems on technogenically impacted lands. Dr. Pelkki, now a member of the Forestry Department of the University of Kentucky, has conducted a variety of research on the economics of forest management and of the restoration of technogenically disturbed lands.