

Meeting Notice February 2017

Of the Rittenhouse Astronomical Society

The Society invites members, guests and the interested public to our upcoming meeting (students encouraged to attend.) FREE / Open to the general public, no admit fee. Membership not required.

GUEST PRESENTER:

Gianna Farrell

Anthropologist, Ethnographer ~ Rowan University

Topic Title:

Contested Constellations

The Emu in the Sky, The Southern Cross & The Crux of the Matter. Star Maps, Flags, Nationalism & Identity in Australia. Can the night sky be colonized?

WHERE:

**THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE
222 20TH STREET & THE PARKWAY
PHILADELPHIA PA**

WHAT: Gianna Farrell Anthropologist, Ethnographer, will look at the way in which the constellations known most commonly to white Australians and westerners as the Southern Cross has been co-opted as a symbol of nationalism. She will look at various Australian flags that use the Southern Cross as a symbol of national identity. Farrell will talk about the Southern Cross's importance as a navigational tool both for the original indigenous inhabitants of Australia and the colonizers of Australia. She will tell some stories about how various Aboriginal groups interpret the Southern Cross--as an emu in the sky, an eagle talon, a possum sitting in a tree, a representation of a sky deity, and a stingray. Time permitting, Farrell will talk about the tradition of Aboriginal astronomy and the way in which Aboriginal star maps have informed the modern day highway system of Australia. She'll also tell you her favorite star story--the story of the Seven Sisters.

WHEN: **Wednesday February 8, 2017; 7:00 PM ~ AGENDA**

7:00 - Doors Open	7:55 - Celestial Soundscapes ~ D. McCormick
7:15 - Call to Order	8:00 - Tech Break
7:20 - Planet Report ~ D. Vacca	8:05 - Guest Presenter ~ Gianna Farrell
7:30 - Sky Tonight ~ T. Williams	8:55 - Observatory Viewing (Weather Permitting/Directed Mixer Poor Weather Alternative)
7:50 - President's Address	

Web Portal: www.RASPhilly.org

Facebook: [RittenhouseAstronomy](https://www.facebook.com/RittenhouseAstronomy)

Mailing Address:

**RITTENHOUSE ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 283
FEASTERVILLE, PA 19053-0283**

Website: <http://www.RittenhouseAstronomicalSociety.org>

Contact: Info: 215-633-0604 ttuu@comcast.net

Gianna Farrell teaches anthropology at Rowan University. She received her M.A. in visual anthropology from Temple University and did fieldwork in Australia. First and foremost, Farrell considers herself a story-teller and believes that anthropology's transformative power lies within the age old art of telling a story. Her interests include the embodiment of structural violence, photography as a methodology, and the anthropology of art. She is an avid birder, hiker, and conservationist. She is particularly interested in nature in urban settings, especially the wildlife that inhabits her backyard. You can read some of her work here. <https://heartbreakingstoriesoldtomebystrangers.wordpress.com> And here <https://spiritnews.org/articles/author/gianna-farrell/arrell>:



Gianna Farrell
Anthropologist
Ethnographer
Rowan University

DATES TO REMEMBER:

February 24, 2017

Community Night Mallon Planetarium, Methacton School District. Members get free planetarium admission with offer to assist at outside with telescopes or binoculars. Details on our [Members Site](#).

March 4, 2017

Muddy Run Observatory First of year Event *Diversity in Astronomy*. More information to be posted on NASA Night Sky Network

April 28, 2017

Philadelphia Science Festival
City Wide Telescope Night
Volunteers needed to assist with telescope views.