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Jessica Blais

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Armstrong to Lecture on Civil Rights Literature

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USFSP English Professor and author Julie Armstrong will speak at Nelson Poynter Memorial Library this month on a subject near and dear to her heart. Join her at Noon on February 17 for “The Civil Rights Movement in Literary Imagination.”

“My talk will focus on two points: the importance of literature to the study of civil rights, and literary representations of the movement itself,” said Armstrong. “For writers involved in the work of social change, words — poetry, fiction, drama, first-person narratives — function as powerful tools.”

Armstrong’s latest book, “American Civil Rights Literature,” will be published at the end of the month, marking some important anniversaries. It was 150 years ago that the 13th Amendment outlawed slavery, which began a process of renegotiating national definitions of terms such as “freedom” and “citizenship” that still trouble us today. Fifty years ago, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 capped one phase of the civil rights movement: the struggle to end legalized Jim Crow.
“I encourage everyone to come out and hear from one of the leading scholars today on the topic of Civil Rights Literature,” said Dr. Frank Biafora, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. “Dr. Armstrong’s research is as inviting as it is powerful, reminding all of us of the many voices and complimentary genres that have propelled the Movement over the past century and a half.”