

**School of Natural Resources
University of Nebraska-Lincoln**

Geography General Seminar

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**Hooters for Neuters: Sexist or Transgressive Animal
Advocacy Campaign?**

Room 228, Hardin Hall
UNL East Campus
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Julie Urbanik earned an M.A. in women's studies from the University of Arizona in 2000 and a Ph.D. in geography from Clark University in 2006. She is currently an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Department of Geosciences at the University of Missouri Kansas City where she teaches courses in human, cultural and political geography, gender and the environment, and animals and society. As a cultural geographer informed by feminist and post-structural perspectives, her research to date has focused on how places become embroiled in the identity politics of nature-society interactions.

Abstract: Pet overpopulation in the United States is an ongoing problem and the euthanization of millions of animals each year places tremendous emotional and financial burdens on local communities. Spaying or neutering animals is considered the most direct solution; however, many people – especially men – continue to refuse these surgeries. Recently, animal advocates have developed campaigns tailored specifically to men. One is the Hooters for Neuters campaign conducted in conjunction with Hooters Restaurants. This program has been effective, but has been met with resistance by both feminists and animal advocates. The issue is whether or not these events are using sexism (via the objectification of women at Hooters) to 'sell' spay/neuter programs. This talk will use the perspective of animal geography, which emphasizes the role of place in the interplay of human-animal relationships, to explore whether this campaign reinforces or transgresses gender stereotypes. I conclude that, in the larger context of gender-based animal advocacy, the Hooters for Neuters campaign *is* a specific place where new constellations of human-male/animal relationships can be forged.

For additional details contact Dr. James Merchant (jmerchant1@unl.edu)

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