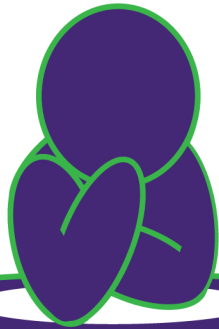


SUNY POTSDAM

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES



SEMINAR SERIES

DISCIPLINED INQUIRY IN EDUCATION

Wednesday, November 16th, 2016, Noon

Literacy Center Balcony

Dr. Laura Brown

Department of Secondary Education

Turning a Small Town into a World of Wonder: Magical Thinking in Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*

Abstract: Green Town, Illinois, the setting for Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*, appears, on the surface, like any other small town in the early 20th century. It is a place where children play kick-the-can, front porches become evening gathering places, and the drug store fountain man serves lime-vanilla ice – a place where time moves more slowly amid a rural landscape. But through the eyes of 12-year-old Douglas Spaulding and other residents, Green Town transforms into something beyond their hometown; it becomes a place of enchantment and wonder, a place where a young boy wakes before dawn and, from an open window, points his finger at the sleepy town before him. In an instant, the sun begins to rise, the streetlights blink out, and people rise from their slumber. But is it really magic or just causal fallacy? Using a psychoanalytic lens, this paper explores the use of magical thinking by characters in the text in an effort to deal with new discoveries and uncertainties that transpire in their lives during the summer of 1928. As townsfolk grow up and grow old, they cling to ritual and the power of thought, making the common uncanny and revealing that the fantastic is still possible, if only we just believe.