

NEWS

The Evergreen State College
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for further information
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The simple model used by economists to predict human behavior will be analyzed by Dr. Russell Lidman, faculty economist at The Evergreen State College, in the fourth Spring Quarter Wednesday Evening Lecture April 20, beginning at 7:30 p.m. in Lecture Hall Three.

His free public talk will examine the critics view that "economists make naive, mechanical assumptions about people," Dr. Lidman says. "Much of that criticism is justified."

"As a general rule," he asserts, "we economists assume humans' behavior can be explained logically, economically, but that assumption usually proves to be irrelevant and I want to discuss the reasons that's the case."

Dr. Lidman, a member of the Evergreen faculty since 1974, says he has studied intently the nature of humanity as revealed through economic institutions. He'll focus on at least two of those institutions which he feels shed an optimistic light on human nature.

"The ways humans reacted to the institution of slavery and to the introduction of assembly production lines illustrate workers' ability to challenge inhumane conditions even if it means loss of material or physical well being," he says.

"An economist would probably have predicted completely different behaviors based solely on economic gain," he explains. "Instead, a number of other factors shaped workers' behaviors in unpredictable ways."

Dr. Lidman also plans to discuss human behaviors in the increasingly confusing arguments between economists and ecologists.

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"To understand the issues raised by both groups, the public has to have clear information on what actions are being taken and what options are available," Dr. Lidman says. "The trouble is many of the ecological issues are surrounded by confusion and little objective information is available."

Formerly a professor at Oberlin College, Dr. Lidman earned his doctorate in economics at the University of Wisconsin at Madison, his master's degree in public affairs at Princeton and his bachelor of science degree in engineering from Cornell.

His Wednesday evening talk is free and open to the public.