One of the most widely publicized cases of our time is that of Amanda Knox, the college student from West Seattle who was convicted of murdering her British roommate in Italy and served four years in prison before being acquitted and released. Retried in absentia, she was convicted again, only to be exonerated by the Italian Supreme Court, which handed down its final opinion in September, 2015.

This lecture explores the Amanda Knox case in the context of our defective ability to judge. Drawing on her interviews with numerous Italian legal experts and with Amanda herself, the speaker will address a broader problem: that of human beings’ prejudice against “strangeness” and our desperation for a hasty assessment of guilt or innocence – qualities that can bleed into a legal system to the detriment of the quest for truth. (speaker’s abstract)

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