

Seeds to Free the Bounty

Agricultural Biodiversity As Policy & Potential

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6:00pm – 7:30pm
Niles Gallery

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Agrobiodiversity is declining worldwide—with stark consequences for food security amidst climate change. Major conservation efforts focus on ex situ collections (gene banks), which though important, can peripheralize in situ (on-farm) regeneration initiatives. This marginalization emerges from a modernist devaluation of place-based knowledge and agrarian skills—which have been gendered, racialized, and class-ized in their devaluation. This talk explores the history, geography, and politics of agrobiodiversity conservation in the Americas, from Andean Peru to Appalachia US. After surveying the political ecologies of monoculture, I analyze the diverse epistemologies at work in policies governing agrobiodiversity--when rendered and digitized as germplasm--and the emergent potential of current seed-saving movements.

Prof. Graddy researches global environmental and agricultural policy and politics. A broadly trained cultural geographer and political ecologist, she is currently writing a book on agricultural biodiversity conservation methods and the epistemologies therein. The book braids: fieldwork in the Peruvian Andes and Appalachian US; international seed and agricultural policy analysis; and social and political theory, namely: postdevelopment studies, (de)colonial theory, and political economy.

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