

GLOBAL

2018-19 SPEAKER SERIES:

AFRICA

Knowing nature otherwise?

Changing views from the East African Plains

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3:30pm-5:00pm in 1080 Derby Hall

What does it mean to speak of a global Africa and how does it help to move conversations regarding nature conservation and rangeland management in new directions? A Global Africa framing highlights the always multiple combinations of ways of knowing, doing, and being that exist across Africa and globally, tying together complex chains of knowledge, technologies, and cultures. It also puts Africa at the center of both historic global connections (of people, resources, and knowledge), and a shared global future, where the climate is uncertain, and new ways of knowing, and being with nature are sorely needed. My talk today focuses on one particular part of Africa (the semi-arid rangelands of Tanzania and Kenya), and one particular group of people who live there (Maasai pastoralists/a-gro-pastoralists), who are piecing together different ways of knowing and being with nature in conjunction with Western enforced management schemes, to make sense of changing social and physical environments. I discuss the need to recognize, not only these different ways of being knowing and managing nature otherwise in the East African Savannah lands, but also the value of using non-linear African narrative forms to tell their stories. African knowledge has long gone unrecognized in global conservation and development work, despite being central to much of the labor that makes the work happen on the ground. Today, as scholars look for new ways of knowing and managing the climate, as well as new framings of nature-society relations, African knowledge and sets of relations provide possibilities to move in new directions for wildlife conservation and range-land management.

Mara J. Goldman is an associate professor in the Department of Geography, a faculty fellow in the Institute for Behavioral Sciences, and an affiliate faculty in the Gender and Women's Studies Program at the University of Colorado-Boulder. She received her PhD in 2006 from the University of Wisconsin-Madison (geography) and holds an MS in Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development also from UW-Madison (2001) as well as an MA in Geography from the University of California Los Angeles (1998). She was a post-doctoral fellow at the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), in Nairobi, where she conducted research on "Communication and the Politics of Participation in Pastoral Societies," among Maasai communities in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania.