



UCSD Science Studies Program

Colloquium Series

presents

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4:00 – 6:00pm

Humanities and Social Sciences Bldg. #3027

Reception prior to talk at 3:30 pm in HSS 3005

Samples and Specimens at Antarctic Biosecurity Borders

Abstract

On the continent and its waters, indigenous Antarctic plants and animals are hardy survivors in an extreme environment, symbols of a last wilderness, and undiscovered lifeforms for scientists to discover and study. When these species arrive or are brought to other continents, though, they may threaten the species native to that place—they might be ecological intruders. Antarctic species, in light of nascent management and conceptual frameworks called biosecurity, are contingent species—possibly interlopers or authentic nature—depending on which borders the species pass through.

This paper tracks the emerging issue of biosecurity—a policy term that addresses non-native species introductions and management—in relation to Antarctic scientific samples as they travel transnationally and pass through national borders, sometimes getting stuck. The transnational space of Antarctica and the biosecurity borders that form along more traditional national boundaries articulate Antarctic species and scientists as sources of knowledge-making, threatened or threatening, and creating the problem or being pummeled by it.

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