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How does someone or something come to be recognized as out of place? This ethno-graphic and historical research project examines how certain people, plants, and animals come to be recognized as being out of place across the pine nut forests and sagebrush rangelands of North America’s western Great Basin. Novel ecosystems, in the parlance of biological ecology, are new configurations of plants and animals that come about through human influence. I focus on four nonhuman figures to illuminate the culture and politics of novel multispecies entanglements: pine nut trees (“weedy native species”), cheatgrass (“nonnative invasive species”), sage grouse (“threatened native species”), and cattle (“other species/domesticates”). I examine these figures through the qualities of indigeneity and hospitality for how they shape the livability of landscapes. Examining the materialities, discourses, and ontologies linking the belonging of human and nonhuman communities on Nevada’s patchy multispecies rangelands, I look at how human and nonhuman actors move across space, constituting new communities while displacing others. What forms of political struggle emerge around what does not belong as part of “nature” and “nation”? How are these conflicts linked to the material practices of land management and the production of nature? I focus on the processes of making things belong and not belong in three adjacent basin and range locations: tension between urbanization and ranching in Carson Valley, Nevada, environmental restoration projects focused on sage grouse in the Pine Nut Mountains, Nevada, and conflict over resource extraction and outdoor recreation in the Bodie Hills and Mono Lake Basin, California.

Monday, January 14th, 2019, 12:30 - 1:20pm
Building 50, 51A