

KEYNOTE LECTURE:

## THE BUCK, THE BULL, AND THE DREAM OF THE STAG: SOME UNEXPECTED WEEDS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

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Two questions guide this talk. First, how have industrial processes changed earth ecologies—even far from industrial centers? Second, given that Anthropocene ecologies have moved outside human design, how shall we understand their geographies as simultaneously global and local? Using invasive fungal pathogens, parasites, and decomposers as my entry point, I will examine histories of invasion that clarify overlapping human and nonhuman world-making, as this leads to feral geographies. On the one hand, such histories illustrate unintentional design, that is, landscapes made by many living things. On the other hand, they suggest that something new—and beyond human control—has emerged in our times, challenging the livable ecologies of earlier landscape dynamics. Indeed, newly deadly more-than-human capacities, with their feral geographies, give substance to the concept of the Anthropocene. Mapping them allows Anthropocene to do crucial work: drawing together a transdisciplinary discussion of industrial effects. The talk thus addresses the possibility of opening disciplinary and conceptual borders, not just for the critique of dichotomies between nature and culture, but also, more urgently, for the making of forms of knowledge, which, while not universal, know what travel is and how to chance it. This is a challenge, then, for both theory and description. Might joining the discussion called “Anthropocene” require humanistic social scientists to rethink our knowledge practices? Meanwhile, the talk is a renewed endorsement of the importance of arts of noticing—and critical description—for our unsettled times.