

**Seeds as Ancestors, Seeds as Archives: Seed Sovereignty and the Politics of
Repatriation to Native Peoples [Abstract]**

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Plants have nurtured Native communities' physical, spiritual, and social well-being for centuries, while people reciprocated by caring for plants not only as integral actors embedded in a wider ecosystem, but also as treasured children and cherished ancestors. With the encroachment of non-Native peoples, however, the web of relationships between people, plants, and the landscape came under threat, including indigenous seeds. Throughout these upheavals, some Native individuals fought to retain knowledge and to keep valued seeds viable by planting them. This paper explores how these relationships with seeds have been disrupted, and, as a means of repairing them today, weighs the potential of repatriating seeds held in banks. I argue that a repatriation initiative should consider the perspectives of Native peoples who first bred these seeds, work to ease their access to them, and articulate how to care for them.

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