



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 47, September 18, 2009
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1. University of Waterloo Grad's Mississippi Expedition Begins with Rowing

The Mississippi River is more meandering than mighty these days for a University of Waterloo graduate and his adventure-loving crew who have begun rowing its 4,000 kilometre length in their hand-built York boat. "It has been a grind," said Brett Rogers, a University of Waterloo graduate in geography and seasoned river rat. "We've got to row, row, row your boat all the time. It's definitely physical. It's like going through Grand River country." [UW Faculty of Environment News](#)

2. Simon Fraser University's New Dean of Green, Geographer John Pierce

Former dean of arts and social sciences, John Pierce, has been named dean of the new Faculty of Environment. Pierce led arts and social sciences from 1997 to 2007. Before that he was director of SFU's Community Economic Development Centre, chair of the department of geography and a founding member of SFU's Centre for Coastal Studies. As dean of the environment faculty, Pierce plans to "promote the development of cross-cutting and innovative research, teaching and

outreach that places a priority on better integrating social/policy sciences with natural sciences in a pure and applied context." [SFU Online](#)

3. University of Toronto's Danny Harvey Knows Which Way the Wind Blows

How do you fight climate change while creating electricity for more than a million households? The answer is blowing in the wind. According to U of T geography professor and energy policy expert Danny Harvey, wind farms could make a significant contribution to our efforts to curb climate change. Harvey has been studying options to phase out the use of fossil fuels since 2001 and completed his PhD on climate modelling at U of T before he began teaching here in 1986. He will publish two books on the topic in the spring: *Energy and the New Reality: Volume 1* and *Energy and the New Reality: Volume 2: C-Free Energy* (Earthscan, London, UK). [News @ University of Toronto](#)

4. University of Waterloo Recognizes Academic Achievement of Alumni

The University of Waterloo celebrates Homecoming and as part of these celebrations, the Faculty of Arts is recognizing the academic achievement of UW alumni. The Department of Geography and Environmental Management nominated [Dan Smith](#) to receive the award in 2009. Past award winners were [Diane Draper](#) (2008) and [Maureen Reed](#) (2007). [UW Arts in Academics](#)

5. UWO Geography Map Library Moved to Weldon Library

Long part of the Department of Geography, Western Libraries has taken over operation of the Serge A. Sauer Map Library and plans eventually to move it to Weldon Library. Created by the Geography Department in the 1960's, the Map Library has been providing reference materials to scholars for nearly half a century. Currently housed on the ground floor of the Social Science Centre, the Map Library is full of maps of all areas of the world and all types of information. As well as over 220,000 unique maps, the library is also home to over 2,000 atlases, several GIS workstations and a collection of aerial photographs of the London area. [Western News](#)

6. McGill University's Peter Brown Discusses Whole Earth Economy

People's spiritual beliefs affect their attitude toward climate change, with religious groups increasingly helping to frame humanity's response to environmental issues. That was one of the messages from a session at the 33rd annual conference of the Association for Baha'i Studies, held in mid-August in Washington, D.C. One of the plenary speakers was [Peter G. Brown](#), a geography professor at McGill University. Dr. Brown said the current economic paradigm is bringing mayhem to the planet and that people need to learn to think of themselves as citizens, not consumers. "We need a different image of ourselves," he said – an image that sees humanity as part of a long "co-

evolutionary” process. Rather than asking how to better exploit the earth's resources, humanity should be asking how to live with an ethic of respect and reciprocity for all life, he said. [Baha’I World News Service](#)

7. WLU Establishes Dr. John McMurry Research Chair in Environmental Geography with \$2.5 Million Gift

Wilfrid Laurier University has received a \$2.5-million donation to the university’s Faculty of Arts to establish a research chair in environmental geography. The donation will establish the Dr. John McMurry Research Chair in Environmental Geography, named in honour of one of Laurier’s most celebrated geography professors and former chair of the department, now retired, Dr. John McMurry. Laurier professor Dr. [Scott Slocombe](#) will be the inaugural chairholder. Dr. Slocombe, a faculty member at Laurier since 1989, is one of Canada’s most prominent geographers. His research focuses on the challenge of managing diverse human activities in large regions while maintaining environmental integrity and sustainability. [Laurier Public Affairs](#) | [KW Record](#) | [National Post](#) |

8. York Geographer Peter Vandergeest Cited in Scientific American Article

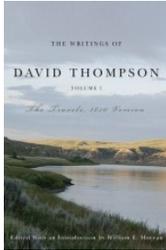
York Geographer [Peter Vandergeest](#) was cited in the September issue of Scientific American in an article entitled "[Conflicted Conservation](#)". The article describes how local and indigenous peoples are often in conflict with large environmental organizations. He was cited in the context of efforts by the WWF to create institutions for certifying shrimp production, noting that these efforts could falter unless the communities that are affected by shrimp farms have a say in setting standards and enforcement. Given the remoteness of many shrimp farms, he explains, auditors’ checks will be rare, and you can easily put on a show. [Scientific American](#)

9. Geographer of the Week: John Rose, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Dr. [John Rose](#) trained as a human geographer, my specific expertise lies in the interconnected fields of social/cultural, urban, and political geography. His intellectual focus developed from his undergraduate education at the University of British Columbia, and through the course of my M.A. and Ph.D. research at UBC which examined different aspects of the social and political integration of recent Chinese- and South Asian-origin immigrants in Greater Vancouver. He maintains a broader interest in issues around immigration policy, urban development, social/cultural/economic change, and politics—an interest that sustains not only his ongoing research projects, but his teaching as well. [Kwantlen Geography](#)

10. Other “Geographical” News

The Writings of David Thompson, Volume 1: The Travels, 1850 Version, edited by William Moreau



David Thompson (1770-1857) is one of the country's great nation-builders. As a fur trader, writer and cartographer who methodically covered more than 90,000 kilometres of the western half of the continent by canoe, sled and foot, he played a pioneering role in shaping all this unbounded immensity. “I think there's a David Thompson moment right now,” says William E. Moreau, a Toronto teacher and researcher who has contributed to the momentousness of the occasion with the first volume of a landmark new edition of Thompson's highly engaging *Travels* published this week. [McGill-Queen's University Press](#)

Arctic Sea Ice Reaches Minimum 2009 Extent, Third Lowest Ever Recorded

The Arctic sea ice cover appears to have reached its minimum extent for the year, the third-lowest recorded since satellites began measuring sea ice extent in 1979, according to the University of Colorado at Boulder's National Snow and Ice Data Center. While this year's September minimum extent was greater than each of the past two record-setting and near-record-setting low years, it is still significantly below the long-term average and well outside the range of natural climate variability. [Science Daily](#)

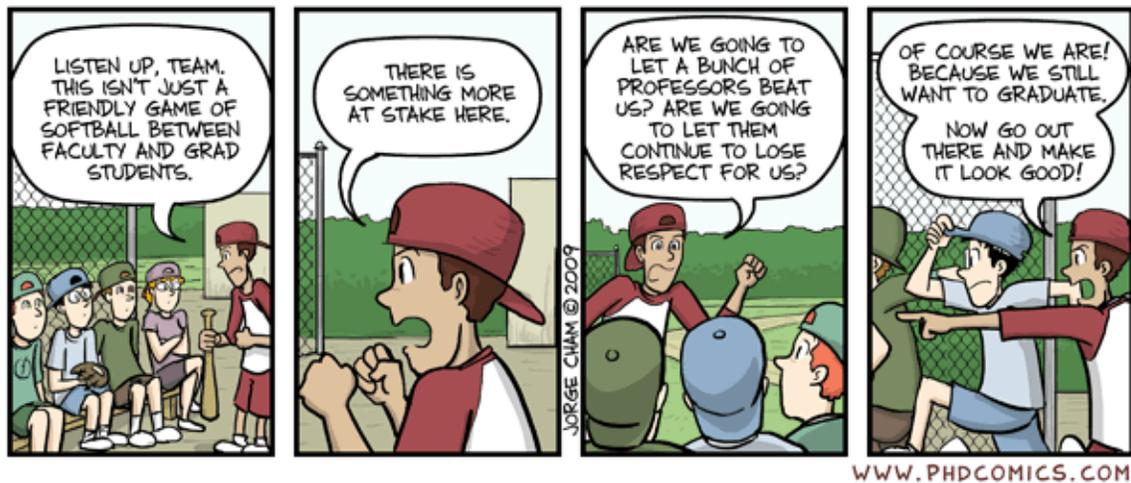
El Niño, Global Warming Link Questioned; Possible Link Between 1918 El Niño and Flu Pandemic?

Research conducted at Texas A&M University casts doubts on the notion that El Niño has been getting stronger because of global warming and raises interesting questions about the relationship between El Niño and a severe flu pandemic 91 years ago. The findings are based on analysis of the 1918 El Niño, which the new research shows to be one of the strongest of the 20th century. [Science Daily](#)

11. Some not so “Geographical” News

The Great Canadian Wine Fraud

Low-cost bulk wines from places like California and South Africa are being sold in government liquor stores as B.C. wines. The wines are sold by Canada’s three biggest winemakers as though they are British Columbia wines. It’s a Canada-wide strategy developed by the three major winemakers in consultation with federal and provincial governments that is supported by provincial liquor boards. The B.C. Liquor Distribution Branch displays the wines as if they were domestic products, identifying their country of origin as Canada. [Vancouver Sun](#)



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