



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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Contents

1. Memorial's Kelly Vodden, Saving the Earth, One Policy at a Time
 2. WLU's Alison Bray-Palmer Asks That People Reconsider What Food Is.
 3. UQAM's Anne Latendresse on Montreal Civic Elections
 4. U Manitoba's Fikret Berkes Challenges Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons"
 5. McMaster U's Antonio Páez on Looming Danger to Canadian Blood Supply
 6. Lakehead Geography Indicates "What you can do with a Geography degree"
 7. CAG's Health and Food Day; Barrie Wellar and Narine Cameron Comment
 8. Dating of Hockey Stick Stalled at Mount Allison U's MAD Lab
 9. UBC's Geraldine Pratt on Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program
 10. UBC's David Ley Asks are there Limits to Gentrification?
 11. Geographer of the Week: Dr. Noella Gray, University of Guelph
 12. Other "Geographical" News
 13. Some not so "Geographical" News
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1. Memorial's Kelly Vodden, Saving the Earth, One Policy at a Time

A childhood in rural Clinton, Ontario, imbued Kelly Vodden with a love of the earth and all its creatures. It is not surprising then that Vodden, who is graduating with a PhD in geography at Simon Fraser University from the new Faculty of Environment, focused her studies on ways to rectify "large-scale government failures" in policy, leading to environmental degradation and species decline. Vodden's field studies led her to isolated communities on the west and east coasts of Canada to analyze cases where cooperation between local people and government resulted in positive outcomes for species and ecologies under threat. Vodden, who juggled a demanding course load as an assistant professor in geography at Memorial University while completing her PhD work at SFU, carried out part of her studies on northern Vancouver Island at the home of the 'Namgis First Nation. [SFU News](#)

2. WLU's Alison Bray-Palmer Asks That People Reconsider What Food Is.

Beyond issues of mere geography, people would do well to reconsider what food is, says Alison Blay-Palmer, an author and professor at Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Ont., who studies sustainable food systems. "Food is not a commodity, like a car, but we try to treat it that way and I think that's problematic," Prof. Blay-Palmer says. Thanksgiving, Prof. Blay-Palmer says, is "an excellent time" for people to reflect on the value of good food. [Globe and Mail](#)

3. UQAM's Anne Latendresse on Montreal Civic Elections

While October is officially women's history month in Montreal, the first since city council unanimously voted two months ago to adopt the federal government's 1992 initiative, you wouldn't know it by the candidates' speeches. That goes equally for Harel, the first female candidate in Montreal history who, opinion polls suggest, has an actual shot at the mayoralty. Harel has refrained from flashing that "membership card," said Anne Latendresse, a professor who specializes in local democracy in the geography department at the Université du Québec à Montréal. "As a result, I think she's not seen as a candidate who would necessarily push the issue of equality between men and women," she said. [The Gazette](#)

4. U Manitoba's Fikret Berkes Challenges Hardin's "Tragedy of the Commons"

Conventional economic theory argued that because individuals each had an incentive to use more common property, it would inevitably be overused or even destroyed. Garrett Hardin, a biologist, expounded this view in an influential essay, The Tragedy of the Commons. Hardin predicted doom for any resource not individually owned. What Hardin ignored is that there are thousands of instances of successfully-managed commons where groups achieved precisely that kind of agreed upon mutual coercion. [Fikret Berkes](#), a geographer at the University of Manitoba, researched Turkish and Canadian fisheries, and his findings challenge Hardin's widely accepted conclusion. [IdahoStatesman.com](#)

5. McMaster U's Antonio Páez on Looming Danger to Canadian Blood Supply

A new study finds that Canada's blood supply could be in danger as the donor population ages. According to health officials young adults make up the majority of the donating public. "Like other countries, Canada's population is aging and the implications of this need to be better understood from the perspective of blood supply," says [Antonio Páez](#), lead researcher and assistant professor in the department of Geography & Earth Sciences at McMaster University. "So while younger people are more likely to donate, they are also a declining share of Canada's population." [AHN Media](#) | [Science Daily](#)

6. Lakehead Geography Indicates “What you can do with a Geography degree”

In an age where people are becoming more and more specialised in their education, there is a growing appreciation among employers - in both the public and the private sector - of the value of someone trained in the broad, integrating discipline that is Geography. Included are three documents providing more details of this fact: one developed by the Association of American Geographers on the role of modern Geography (remember that Geography has a much lower profile in the United States than it has in Canada) and two shorter pieces from Canadian universities on the career opportunities open to geographers. [Lakehead Geography](#)

7. CAG’s Health and Food Day; Barrie Wellar and Narine Cameron Comment

Dining out on good local food while on holiday has received the stamp of approval from the Canadian Association of Geographers, which has named 10 websites that highlight specialties across the country. The list – covering everything from Nova Scotia fiddleheads to B.C. wines to Yukon Arctic char – is being offered as part of the association's annual promotional effort, Geography Awareness Week (Nov. 16-20), and to point out the benefits of culinary tourism. Barry Wellar, director of the project and a former geography professor at the University of Ottawa, says he wants people to pay more attention to where food comes from and to the possibility that some habitats are threatened. [Narine Cameron](#), a geography professor at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, selected the websites to explore one of the themes of Geography Awareness Week: food and health. "Culinary tourism can broaden travellers' horizons and is an excellent way to learn more about the local physical environment, customs, culture and people." [The Toronto Star](#)

8. Dating of Hockey Stick Stalled at Mount Allison U’s MAD Lab

The quest to determine if a piece of Cape Breton sugar maple is in fact a national treasure and hockey's Holy Grail has been halted indefinitely. Experts at Mount Allison University have stopped work at verifying what some historians believe is the world's oldest hockey stick because it's not a paying gig. [Colin Laroque](#), head of the university's dendrochronology lab, said the age verification of the stick will remain on hold as other funded projects continue to take priority. "It's unfortunate, it really is," Laroque said. "No one is paying us so the projects that are being paid for have to be higher priority and worked on actively." The stick was thrust into the national spotlight last February when Nova Scotian Mark Presley, the owner of the stick, appeared in Campbellton for Hockey Day in Canada. [Telegraph-Journal](#)

9. UBC's Geraldine Pratt on Canada's Live-in Caregiver Program

There is undoubtedly wrongdoing and exploitation on both sides of the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP). [Geraldine Pratt](#), a University of B.C. geography professor who's conducted extensive research in this area, questions the purpose of the LCP. Is it an immigration policy or a temporary work visa policy, she asks. LCPers arrive with a temporary work visa and must complete 24 months of live-in work within a 36-month period before obtaining an open visa and applying for permanent residency. "I don't think the federal government knows what kind of impact the [LCP] has on the families. The family separation is totally unacceptable... I'd like to know how the government reconciles the contradictions in the temporary work visa program that then becomes a migration program", said Pratt. [The Vancouver Courier](#)

10. UBC's David Ley Asks are there Limits to Gentrification?

Led by David Ley from the Department of Geography at University of British Columbia, is presenting a seminar entitled "*Are there Limits to Gentrification? Evidence from Vancouver*". The seminar takes place at 4:00pm on Monday, October 19, 2009 in Room 2125 of Sidney Smith Hall, located at 100 St. George Street in Toronto. Professor Ley is Canada's foremost expert on issues relating to gentrification and inner-city neighbourhood change. His research interests focus on downtown and inner-city topics, as well as broader issues in urban, social and cultural geography. [Canadian Architect](#) | [Seminar Details](#)

11. Geographer of the Week: Dr. Noella Gray, University of Guelph

Dr. [Noella Gray](#) is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography at the University of Guelph. She completed her PhD at Duke University in 2009. Noella is interested in the politics of conservation and environmental governance – in how access to natural resources is defined and contested by resource users, experts, civil society and the state. More specifically, she considers how science is incorporated into environmental policy, the politics of scale in marine conservation, and how resource management policies are negotiated under co-management arrangements. She has studied both ecotourism and marine protected areas as examples of conservation interventions. [U Guelph Geography](#)

12. Other "Geographical" News

The Virtual Museum of Canada

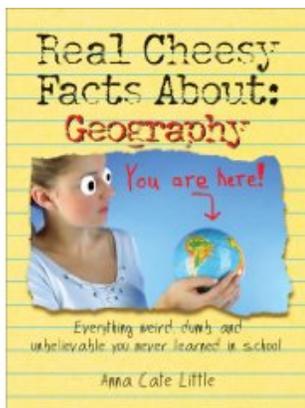
A collection of collections, the Virtual Museum of Canada has items from many different museums across Canada. It can also help those who want to visit offline, as the site also includes museum news and details for those who want to visit Canada's museums. The "Virtual Exhibits", "Image

Gallery", and "Teachers' Centre" tabs near the top of the homepage should not be missed. The "Virtual Exhibits" have a variety of different offerings, and there are over 780,000 images to view. [Virtual Museum](#)

Geographer David Thompson's Country Wife, Charlotte Small

Charlotte Small, born of a Cree mother and Scottish fur trader, was all of 14 in 1799 when she married David Thompson, known as the world's greatest land geographer. Thompson was limp and half-blind when they met. The marriage lasted 57 years and produced 13 children. It is calculated that her travels with Thompson as he charted the West covered three to four times the distance, on foot and in a canoe, racked up by Lewis and Clark. Small travelled with babies and young children, providing her husband with survival and interpretation skills. A [statue of Small, aside Thompson](#), has been erected in Invermere, British Columbia. A humble token of appreciation for her part in the history of the nation and a rare victory in the protracted battle to get some deserved recognition for the women who helped build a country. [Winnipeg Free Press](#) | [Globe and Mail](#)

13. Some not so "Geographical" News



[*Real Cheesy Facts About: Geography: Everything Weird, Dumb, and Unbelievable You Never Learned in School.*](#) By Anna Cate Little

Little-known geography trivia to answer such obscure queries as: What U.S. city/state name doesn't contain consonants? What country controls more islands than any other nation? What is the only U.S. state that touches two oceans? Becoming a geography expert has never been so painless.

GeogNews Archives:

<http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>