



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers

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Compiled by Dan Smith [<cag@geog.uvic.ca>](mailto:cag@geog.uvic.ca)

Contents

1. UVic Geography Graduate Mary Smulders Conducts Research on Lions in Kenya
 2. Mount Allison Geography Student Carrie White Stands Out at ACAG 2009 Meeting
 3. SFU's Sean Robertson Comments on Public Trust in Hate Crime Designation
 4. UVic Geography Graduates Needham and Szuster on Perceptions of Saving Coral Reefs
 5. Ottawa U's Luke Copeland Wins President's Award for Media Relations
 6. Bill Hamilton Returns to Teaching Role at Vancouver Island University
 7. U Alberta's Alexander Wolfe Uses Lake Bed Sediments to Reveal Arctic Climate History
 8. WLU's Sean Doherty Uses GIS Tools to Improve Patient Health Care
 9. UBC Okanagan's Carlos Teixeira Organizes Forum Looking at Immigrant Experiences
 10. Geographer of the Week: Sonia Wesche, University of Northern British Columbia
 11. Other "Geographical" News
 12. Some not so "Geographical" News
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1. UVic Geography Graduate Mary Smulders Conducts Research on Lions in Kenya

"Lion vomit might just be the worst smell in the world." That juicy tidbit is just part of the ongoing education of geography master's student Mary Smulders. Smulders won't be on hand to receive her MSc degree during Fall Convocation because she's busy conducting research on lions in Kenya. Smulders is assisting with lion captures, taking body measurements, organizing blood and tissue samples, and helping attach GPS and radio telemetry collars to monitor lion movement. For now, Smulders explains, "I hope to use spatial analysis techniques learned from my MSc to model lion movement in relation to thorn enclosures, called bomas, where herders keep their livestock. With this information we hope to better examine the relationship between lions, livestock and herders as lion predation on cattle often results in their death." [The Ring](#)

2. Mount Allison Geography Student Carrie White Stands Out at ACAG 2009 Meeting

Fourth year environmental science student Carrie White came away from the 21st annual meeting of the Atlantic division of the Canadian Association of Geographers with the top prize for oral presentation by a science student. The Maitland, NS student presented the results of her research that saw her flying by float plane into northern Labrador in search of old-growth

forest along treeline, sampling the trees, and then going to a Victoria, BC lab to use a specialized X-ray procedure to look at the wood characteristics of the trees. Last year White also won the best oral presentation by a science student, and this year's feat marks the first time that the same person has ever won in back-to-back meetings. [Mount Allison News Release](#)

3. SFU's Sean Robertson Comments on Public Trust in Hate Crime Designation

Sean Robertson wrote an article in *Xtra West*, saying Vancouver's gay community has witnessed at least 10 gaybashings in the past 12 months. Sean was a lawyer in a former life and is currently a doctoral student in Geography at Simon Fraser University studying the politics of indigenous cultural property. He says "The most frustrating aspect of the battle to prevent hate is the apparent unwillingness of BC's Crown counsel to prosecute gaybashings as hate crimes. . . . The Crown's reluctance to consider anything but the most blatant evidence of hate motivation has undermined public trust in its use of the hate crime designation." [SFU People in the News](#) | [XTRA! West](#)

4. UVic Geography Graduates Needham and Szuster on Perceptions of Saving Coral Reefs

An analysis done in Hawaii over several years found that most people visiting the state's coral reef ecosystems enjoy them and care deeply about them, and will generally endorse whatever management is needed to protect them. "It was really quite astonishing, almost shocking, how much people wanted this resource protected for its own sake," said Mark Needham, a UVic Geography graduate and assistant professor at Oregon State University. Our surveys found overwhelmingly that people visiting coral reef areas did not think that human use and access were the most important issues when it came to these areas. And, if anything was to have a deleterious effect on reef ecosystems, they would want it stopped." Needham is now working with Brian Szuster, another UVic Geography graduate, to examine this topic in other areas of the state and internationally. [Hawaii Coral Reef Initiative](#) | [Honolulu Advertiser](#)

5. Ottawa U's Luke Copland Wins President's Award for Media Relations

The President's Award for Media Relations is an annual award that recognizes members of the University of Ottawa community who have demonstrated outstanding service to the University by sharing their expertise with the larger community through the media. Luke Copland, of the Department of Geography, has garnered national and international recognition in recent years for his research in changing ice conditions in northern climates, more specifically in the Canadian Arctic. He has been featured in thousands of print, television and radio interviews in every major country, and more recently has worked with both French and English documentary producers to provide in-depth explanations on glaciological changes. [University of Ottawa Media Room](#)

6. Bill Hamilton Returns to Teaching Role at Vancouver Island University

Dr. Bill Hamilton has returned to teaching at Vancouver Island University this semester after a 10 year furlough. At present, he is teaching GEOG 100 - World Regional Geography. He taught in the Geography Department at Okanagan University-College, specializing in Human, Cultural, and Urban geography courses. Bill delivered a presentation on "How Eureka, California Maintained its Sense of Place through Preservation of its Victoria Architectural Heritage" to the Vernon Heritage Society in March 2007. He also had an e-publication titled "[Santa Fe Style in the Okanagan Valley: Adaptation and Popularization of a Regional Architectural Image](#)" republished in *Terrain: A Journal of the Built and Natural Environment* (Vol. II).

7. U Alberta's Alexander Wolfe Uses Lake Bed Sediments to Reveal Arctic Climate History

Unearthed lake sediments from an ancient lake bed located on Baffin Island may shed light on the state of climate change in the Arctic. An international study of the lake, which included the University of Alberta and the University of Colorado, among other institutions, examined sediment layers dating back over 200,000 years. Every time there's an ice age, the ice flows over [this] lake and doesn't erode the sediments out from the bottom of the lake," said Alexander Wolfe of the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences at the U of A, and contributor to the study. [The Gateway](#)

8. WLU's Sean Doherty Uses GIS Tools to Improve Patient Health Care

Sean Doherty, an associate professor of geography and environmental studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, is a man on the move, literally. He is using the latest mobile technology, in combination with geographical information system tools, to improve patient health care by giving health professionals the means to construct "spatial" diaries that show how a patient's movements affect his or her health and welfare. Doherty is working with a Toronto-based weight loss clinic that is interested in using his software and monitoring systems to help clients overcome the health challenges they face. [Techspotlight](#)

9. UBC Okanagan's Carlos Teixeira Organizes Forum Looking at Immigrant Experiences

Academics, government and non-government policy-makers from across North America will meet in Kelowna on November 13 to discuss the issues that face immigrants in small and medium-sized cities in Canada and the United States. Immigration to Canada and the U.S. has been recognized as an essential element in demographic development and economic growth, says Carlos Teixeira, Associate Professor of Human Geography at UBC Okanagan. "While all levels of Canadian government and their agencies have introduced policies and programs to support the regional re-distribution of new immigrants across the country, results show that small and mid-sized cities and rural communities continue to face attraction and retention challenges for newcomers," Teixeira says. [UBC O Media Releases](#)

10. Geographer of the Week: Sonia Wesche, University of Northern British Columbia

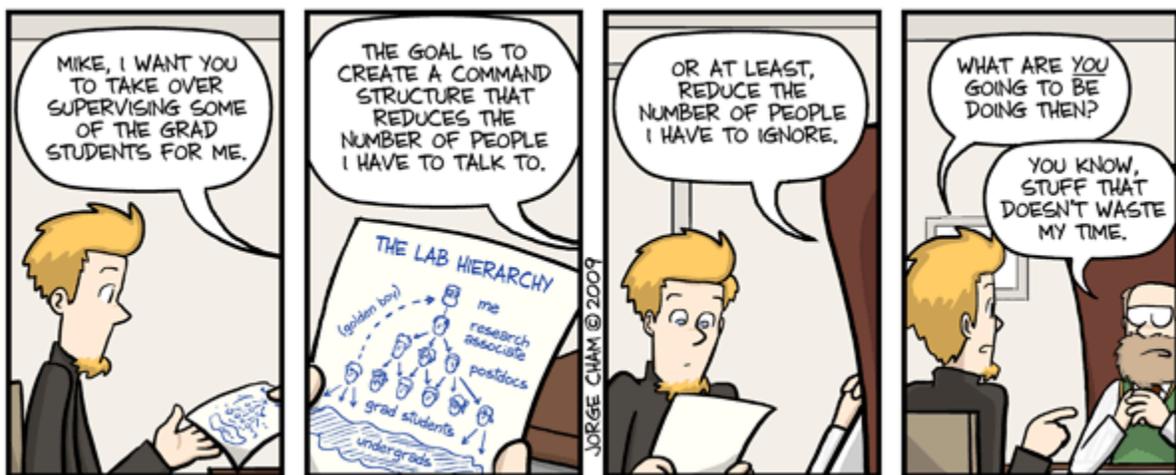
Dr. [Sonia Wesche](#) holds a post-doctoral fellowship at the University of Northern British Columbia. Her background includes studies in geography and environmental management at the University of Ottawa (BA), Imperial College (MSc), and Wilfrid Laurier University (PhD). She was introduced to northern research during her doctoral work with the Dene in Fort Resolution, NWT. Her current research investigates the impacts of climate change on food-related perceptions of health, levels of food security, and environmental and social determinants of adaptive capacity across households and communities in Canada's Arctic. [UNBC Geography](#)

11. Other "Geographical" News

Alberta's Hidden Valleys Offer Both Resources and Danger

Alberta is crisscrossed with hidden glacial valleys that hold both resource treasures and potential danger. University of Alberta researcher Doug Schmitt discovered a 300 metre deep, valley hidden beneath the surface of the ground near the community of Rainbow Lake in northwestern Alberta. The valley was created by glaciers and over time filled with loose rock gradually disappearing from the landscape. If these hidden alleys go undetected by standard underground mapping practices there could be serious consequences. Schmitt says if a tailings pond were unknowingly put in an area like this and the liner failed, the effluent could spread far and wide, underground via the aquifer. [ScienceDaily](#)

12. Some not so "Geographical" News



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