



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers  
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### **1. *Toronto Life* Magazine Features UT Mississauga Geographer Pierre Desrochers**

The December 2009 issue of *Toronto Life* magazine features 25 World Changing Ideas from the Smartest Torontonians and 10 of them - 40 per cent -- come from research done by professors based at U of T and its teaching hospitals. People involved in the local food movement aren't necessarily fond of U of T Mississauga geography professor Pierre Desrochers, who is no proponent of the environmental benefits of eating locally grown items. Desrochers, No. 21 on the *Toronto Life* list, believes that most of the energy needed to get produce to our tables is expended during production, not delivery, so concerns about environmental effects should focus on food production, not distribution. Desrochers, told *Toronto Life*, "Activists romanticize subsistence agriculture and ignore the facts." [News@UofT](#)

### **2. Dr. Margot Parkes Joins UNBC as CRC in Health, Ecosystems and Society**

Dr. Margot Parkes is joining the University of Northern British Columbia as an Assistant Professor in the Health Sciences Programs and Canada Research Chair in Health, Ecosystems and Society. Dr. Parkes comes to northern BC to examine the effect of changing

ecosystems on the health and well-being of communities, with a focus on water as a common resource for livelihoods, food security, culture and economies. Her work will bring together organizations, communities and researchers involved in health and water governance in the northern Fraser River Basin, which includes Prince George, Burns Lake, Fort St. James, Fraser Lake, McBride, Valemount, and Vanderhoof. Margot is going to be an "Affiliated Geographer" in the UNBC Geography Program. [UNBC Communications](#)

### **3. Vancouver Island U's Alan Gilchrist on Vancouver Island Water Resource Vulnerability**

Dr. Alan Gilchrist's research for the last three years has focussed on the [Vancouver Island Water Resources Vulnerability Mapping Project](#); the project is due to be completed in 2010. The project's aim is to produce maps of the intrinsic vulnerability of groundwater to contamination by chemical hazards, and to help the Vancouver Island Regional Districts take groundwater vulnerability into account when planning land use and development. The initial pilot study analyzed the Regional Districts of Nanaimo (RDN) and the Cowichan Valley (CVRD) and was completed in Spring 2009. The maps are already being used by the RDN for the Official Community Plan review of Area A. Mapping for the rest of Vancouver Island is ongoing. This project has provided employment for several graduates of the Geography and Advanced Diploma in GIS Programs at VIU. [Alan Gilchrist Website](#)

### **4. Chuck Hostovsky Appointed Research Associate to University of Toronto's Cities Centre**

Chuck Hostovsky, PhD, MCIP, was appointed to the [University of Toronto's Cities Centre](#) as a Research associate and is the first sessional lecturer to be appointed there. The [Cities Centre](#) is a multi-disciplinary research institute established February 2007 in response to one of the five major research priorities defined in the University's "Stepping Up" plan. The mandate of the Centre is broad: to encourage and facilitate research, both scholarly and applied, on cities and on a wide range of urban policy issues, both in Canada and abroad, and to provide a gateway for communication between the University and the broader urban community. Chuck holds a BA in Geography (Toronto), a MES in Planning (York) and PhD in Regional Planning & Resource Management (Waterloo 2003). He completed his NSERC funded post-doc at McMaster in Traffic Engineering and Transportation Planning. The author of 11 refereed publications, the focus of his research and practice has been environmental planning in the context of regional infrastructure, especially the impacts urban sprawl has on that infrastructure – mainly focusing on sustainable transportation and waste management systems. However, he is also pursuing interests in greenway (biodiversity) planning, and most recently – the relationship between public health, environmental quality and the built environment. Recurring themes in his work have included the need improve environmental impact assessment processes in terms of reducing our carbon footprints in waste management and transportation systems and as well as promoting environmental and social justice in regulatory processes. As sessional lecturers are not allowed to apply for SSHRC and NSERC grants, please contact Chuck at [chuck.hostovsky@utoronto.ca](mailto:chuck.hostovsky@utoronto.ca) if you would like to add him to your research proposal

## **5. U Guelph's Noella Gray Lands in the Department of Geography to Study MPAs**

After 17 moves in the past 14 years, newly arrived geography professor Noella Gray is looking forward to "being in one place for more than a year." Her frequent moves have been in pursuit of both educational and research opportunities and have taken her to Australia, Panama, Costa Rica and Belize, among other places. "I'm interested in marine protected areas (MPAs), which are parks, except they're on water instead of land," she says. There are about 6,000 MPAs around the world, and 14 of them are in Belize. "In some areas, the MPA means no fishing at all. In Belize, many of the MPAs are protecting coral reefs, and the country allows limited fishing and promotes them as tourist destinations for snorkelling and scuba diving." Gray says one of the things that drew her to U of G is its environmental governance program, which is a joint effort between the Department of Geography and the Department of Political Science. [UG College of Social and Applied Human Sciences](#)

## **6. U Waterloo's Dan Kellar on Site 41 Resistance**

The "People's Fire" has been allowed to burn to ashes at the 150-day-old protest camp on 2nd Concession Road in Simcoe County, across from the proposed Site 41 landfill development 45 kilometres east of Blue Mountain, Ontario. September 22, 2009 will remain lodged in the memories of everyone involved in the Site 41 struggle as the day Simcoe County Council voted 26-3 in favour of cancelling the proposed garbage dump project. While the protest camp itself is no longer active, the campaigns for ecological and social justice continue. The is working toward ensuring that the land is restored to a state which is as near its pre-disruption state as possible. A campaign is also underway to have the mischief and intimidation charges dropped for the 17 protesters arrested at Site 41. Only Indigenous protesters were charged with intimidation. Dan Kellar is a geography PhD student in Waterloo. [The Dominion](#)

## **7. RMCC's Lubomyr Luciuk on Rafael Lemkin, Father of the Genocide Convention**

Rafael Lemkin who coined the term 'genocide,' called the Holodomor a classic case of Soviet genocide. He rests beneath a simple stone in New York's Mount Hebron cemetery, the sole clue to his historical importance an inscription incised below his name - "Father of the Genocide Convention." This year, Nov. 28 is the date on which the Holodomor's victims will be hallowed. Thousands of postcards bearing Lemkin's image and citing his words have been mailed to ambassadors worldwide with governments being asked to acknowledge what was arguably the greatest crime against humanity to befoul 20<sup>th</sup> century European history. There is no doubt that Lemkin knew the famine in Soviet Ukraine was genocidal. If the world chooses to ignore what he said than what this good man fathered – the word "genocide" – will lose all meaning, forever more. Professor Lubomyr Luciuk teaches political geography at the Royal Military College of Canada. [KyivPost](#)

## **8. Vancouver Island U's Jeff Lewis Adds to School-Based Weather Station Network**

Dr. Jeff Lewis has installed two additional automated local weather stations as part of a network of weather stations installed at schools across southern Vancouver Island. Funded by NSERC's Promo Science program, in partnership with several school districts on Vancouver

Island and A Channel TV, the UVic School-Based Weather Station Network is designed to peak interest in atmospheric sciences among local students and the general public. Information about the network and weather reports for each of the weather stations is available at [nanaimoweather.ca](http://nanaimoweather.ca).

## **9. Research Funding Success at University of Western Ontario Geography Department**

For the second consecutive year, research funding generated from the Western's Department of Geography has exceeded \$1 million. Much of these monies are used to support graduate student research. Find out more about some of the funded research projects within the Department at: [2009-2010 UWO Geography Funding](#).

## **10. Geographer of the Week: Eva Dabrowska, University of Alberta**

[Dr. Eva Dabrowska](#) is a Faculty Lecturer in the Department of Earth and Atmospheric Sciences teaching human geography. She completed a MSc degree from the Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland and a PhD degree from Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Canada. Her research interests include human geography, community development, urban geography, international development, Europe, social impact assessment, hazard management and the public understanding of science. [Human Geography @ University of Alberta](#)

## **11. Other "Geographical" News**

### **Roll a Marble, Observe Climate Change in Cambridge Bay**

You might think Cambridge Bay is located too far north to experience the effects of global warming. But buildings are showing the impact of the changing climate. If you roll a marble on the floor in one Cambridge Bay home, it gravitates to the centre because the building is buckling in due to permafrost melt underneath. To this end, Cambridge Bay is one of five communities in Nunavut now under scrutiny as part of the Canada-Nunavut climate change or atuliquq partnership, formed to support adaptation to climate change in Nunavut communities. The name of the pilot project, Atuliquq (which means coming into force in Inuktitut), reflects its goal of trying to help communities minimize damage from climate change damage and benefit from any positive opportunities from climate change. [Nunatsiaq News](#)

### **New Method to Measure Snow, Vegetation Moisture with GPS**

A research team has found a way to use traditional GPS satellite signals to measure snow depth as well as soil and vegetation moisture. The researchers developed a technique that uses interference patterns created when GPS signals that reflect off of the ground -- called "multipath" signals. Since such multipath signals arrive at GPS receivers "late," they have generally been viewed as noise by scientists and engineers and have largely been ignored. In a recent demonstration, the team was able to correlate changes in the multipath signals to snow depth by using data collected at a field site. [EurekAlert!](#) | [ScienceDaily](#)

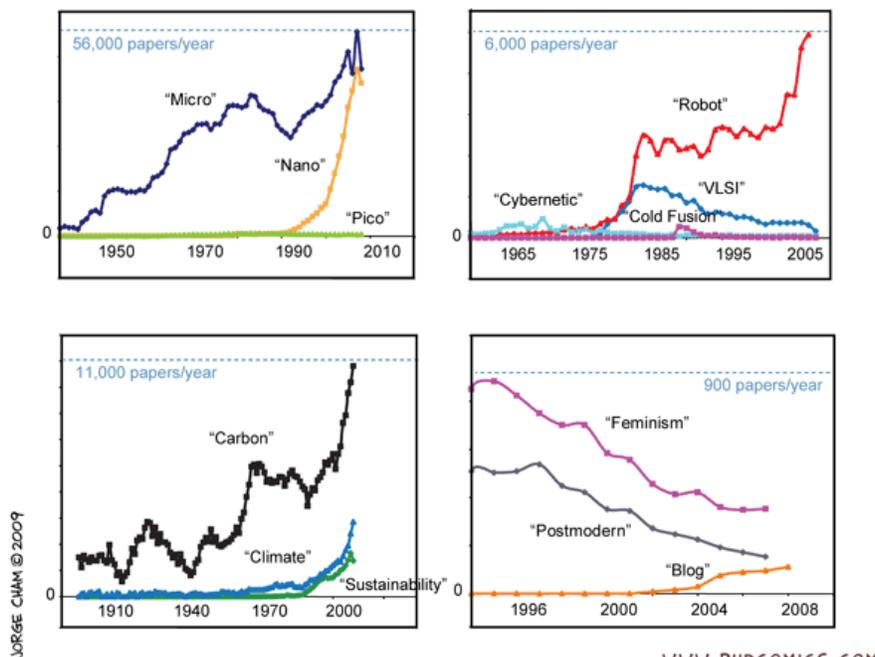
## Global Study of Salmon Shows: 'Sustainable' Food Isn't so Sustainable

Popular thinking about how to improve food systems for the better often misses the point, according to the results of a three-year global study of salmon production systems. Rather than pushing for organic or land-based production, or worrying about simple metrics such as "food miles," the study finds that the world can achieve greater environmental benefits by focusing on improvements to key aspects of production and distribution. For example, what farmed salmon are fed, how wild salmon are caught and the choice to buy frozen over fresh matters more than organic vs. conventional or wild vs. farmed when considering global scale environmental impacts such as climate change, ozone depletion, loss of critical habitat, and ocean acidification. The study is the world's first comprehensive global-scale look at a major food commodity from a full life cycle perspective. [EuerkAlert!](#)

### 12. Some not so "Geographical" News

## Buzzwords!

Number of papers published per year with the corresponding word in the its title.



Scale: All figures normalized by number of journals in print each year.  
Sources: ISI Web of Knowledge, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory.

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