



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
**No. 66, January 20, 2010**  
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**SFU's Nick Blomley on Benefits of the Woodward Project:** In February, Simon Fraser University will open its massive Centre for the Performing Arts in the project. It includes half a dozen performance or cinema spaces, with a gala launch of theatre director Robert Lepage's *The Blue Dragon*. Nick Blomley, SFU Geography professor and author of *Unsettling the City* notes that "The creativity within this neighbourhood is really strong, and we do have projects that intersect with the residents here. It's good to be living with people rather than being on the outside. And it closes the divide." [Globe and Mail](#)

**Memorial U's Norm Catto Won't Make Promises About Goose Cove Apple Trees:** Goose Cove hasn't got many worries about forest fires - it doesn't have any trees. Well ... that's not completely true. Goose Cove does have an apple orchard, albeit a very small one. There are two apple trees in Reg and Phyllis Sexton's yard, both are under a foot high and spread themselves low against the ground, desperately hiding from the wind that whips through Goose Cove. It's those northeast winter winds, or rather the lack of them, that were on Mr. Sexton's mind. Until last week's cold snap, the warm winter weather dominated conversation across the Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador. When asked whether Mr. Sexton's stunted apple trees can expect some compassion from mother nature this winter, Dr. Catto wasn't making any promises. [Northern Pen](#)

**CAG Geography of Health and Health Care Speciality Group Newsletter:** The [Geography of Health and Health Care Speciality Group](#) (GHHCSG) has published the Winter 2010 edition of their newsletter. The new co-editors of the newsletter, Jonathan Cinnamon and Melissa Giesbrecht, are both 1st year PhD students at Simon Fraser University. This edition of the newsletter contains updates on the McMaster Institute of Environment and Health, reflections on the International Medical Geography Symposium in Hamilton, and spotlights on Heather Castleden (Dalhousie), Joshua Evans (Athabasca), Jeff Masuda (Manitoba), and Chantelle Richmond (Western). [GHHCSG Newsletter, Winter 2010](#)

**McGill U's Sebastian Breau Examines Montreal and the Aerospace Industry:** Montreal has had a prominent aerospace cluster since the early 20th century, but only during World War II did agglomeration really occur. "What you started to see was the emergence of various supporting services, and maintenance companies fine-tuning these planes before embarking on journeys during WWII," says Sebastien Breau, a McGill geography professor. But it would take a boost from a larger manufacturer to really put the industry on the world stage. "It's really only recently with ... the advent of Bombardier that the aerospace scene in Montreal has really consolidated as the number one cluster in terms of aerospace in Canada," says Breau. [The McGill Tribune](#)

**Trent U's J. Graham Cogley Tracks Down Errors in United Nations Statement:** An influential United Nations panel is facing growing criticism about its practices after acknowledging doubts about a 2007 statement that Himalayan glaciers were retreating faster than those anywhere else and would entirely disappear by 2035, if not sooner. It was unlikely that these revelations about the IPCC report would overturn the scientific consensus on glacial retreat, but they raised questions for the IPCC about

how the data on Himalayan glaciers were collected and reviewed. "There's a failure to review this data adequately by qualified experts," said J. Graham Cogley, professor of geography at Trent University in Ontario, who is one of the first people to track down some of the apparent errors. [The Wall Street Journal](#) | [ABC News](#) |

**CAG Canadian Geomorphology Research Group Newsletter:** The January 2010 issue of '*The Canadian Landscape*', the newsletter of the [Canadian Geomorphology Research Group](#), is available online. Highlights of this issue include notice that Steve Kokelj won the 2009 J. Ross Mackay Award and a report on the Joint CGRG-CANQUA meeting held at Simon Fraser University. The issue includes profiles on Waterloo's Martin Ross and Dal's Alan Hildy, as well as records the 2009 Slaymaker Award winners Tom Barchyn (Lethbridge, Geography) and James Dionne (SFU). Bethany Coulthard, a graduate student at the University of Victoria, was awarded the CGRG's Jean-Claude Dionne Award for best oral presentation at the 2009 Canadian Association of Geographers meeting. [CGRG Newsletter No. 27](#)

**Waterloo and WLU Grad Students Wade into Debate about Sediment in Old Ausable River:** Sediment in the Old Ausable River Channel is not building as quickly as cottagers feared, meaning they can improve the channel for recreational use without threatening the fish that are considered "species at risk." Graduate students enrolled in a University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University in the UW/Laurier co-instructed by Roland Hall and Brent Wolfe, associate professor and Northern Research Chair in Laurier's department of geography and environmental studies, students also showed that efforts by cottagers in recent years to reduce fertilizer use and avoid dumping lawn wastes into the channel have led to marked water-quality improvements". Another group of students used radiometric methods to determine that the rate of sediment infilling doubled after a dam was installed in 1962 in the Pinery Provincial Park to raise water levels and reduce annual fluctuations. [FPinfomart.ca](#)

**SFU's Valerie Preston on Why Immigrants Not Benefiting from Moving to Canada:** During a recent lecture, York geography professor Valerie Preston recalled the experience of a friend – a doctor licensed at a pre-eminent medical institution in Sweden – who failed to get accredited in Canada. Preston pointed out that the predicament of Canada's foreign-educated immigrants calls for more targeted training and assessment specific to every country's differing practice. Doing so would eliminate the ethnic barrier that is preventing Canada from benefiting from the talent that its large immigrant population has to offer. [Excalibur](#)

**U Alberta's John England Laments Lack of Funding for Northern Research:** Canadian researchers are being left out in the cold by the Ottawa bureaucracy. "Many northern researchers simply can't afford to get where they need to go," says John England, at the University of Alberta, who is urging the Harper government to intervene. In a pointed report in the high-profile British journal [Nature](#), England deplores the lack of support for researchers charting the transformation underway in Canada's North, one of the most rapidly changing places on Earth. "The capacity to support researchers in remote field sites has plummeted, making it difficult for Canadian researchers to continue crucial monitoring" he reports. He cancelled his own fieldwork last year so two of his PhD students could get to and from Banks Island in the western Arctic. In the end, he says, they were still saddled with a \$110,000-bill for helicopter and aircraft support that rang it at \$1,800 an hour. [Dose.ca](#) | [Canadian Press](#) | [Global News](#) | [OfficialWire](#) |

**U Delaware Presents Michael D. Olsen Research Achievement Award to Daniel Fesenmaier of Temple University:** he award, which honors Olsen, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University professor emeritus, for his work in mentoring graduate students and encouraging the development of hospitality educators and scholars, was presented during the 15th annual Graduate Education and Graduate Student Research Conference. Fesenmaier received his doctorate in geography from the

University of Western Ontario in London, Canada, and taught at the University of Oklahoma, Texas A&M University, Indiana University and the University of Illinois before joining the faculty at Temple. [UDaily](#)

### **Geographer of the Week: Dr. Elizabeth Simms, Memorial University of Newfoundland**

Dr. [Elizabeth Simms](#) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at Memorial University. She received her MSc degree at the Université de Sherbrooke and completed her PhD at the Université de Montréal. She has been at Memorial University of Newfoundland since 1990 where she teaches remote sensing and introductory geographic information science courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels. The remote sensing courses are part of the Minor and Major the department of Geography offers, and the Diploma in Geographic Information Sciences the Faculty of Arts offers since 2001. The research projects conducted under her supervision include mapping of coastal ice from radar images, satellite image analysis for the characterization boundary environments such as the coastal zone, Arctic tree line and glacier ice margins. Other topics of interest to Elizabeth are the evaluation of remote sensing classification schemes for the representation of landscape features perceived and described through Aboriginal language. [Memorial Geography](#)

### **Other “Geographical” News**

**Dynamic Maps Aid Epidemiological Investigations:** A team of researchers has developed a dynamic mapping tool to gain a more nuanced view of the links between diseases and environmental exposures. The application of the method is illustrated by a number of examples of associations between environmental exposures and Salmonella infections among people in the US age 65 and over in 2002. Analysis of the dynamic maps revealed that Salmonella infections were more common during the summer months, were highly clustered in the South, and were potentially more common in areas with high broiler chicken sales. The study published in [Environmental Health](#) features a set of principles the researchers developed to enhance the use of dynamic mapping technology in epidemiological research. [EurekAlert!](#) | [ScienceDaily](#)

**Lost city of Atlantis 'could be buried in southern Spain':** A team of researchers from Spain's Higher Council for Scientific Study (CSIC) are examining a marshy area of Andalusian parkland to find evidence of a 3,000-year-old settlement. Until now historians had dismissed the region as a possible site for Atlantis believing that it had been submerged since the ice age. But it is claimed new evidence suggests the waters may have receded in time for the Tartessians to build an urban centre, which was later destroyed in a tsunami. Aerial photos show the existence of large circular and rectangular forms that could not have been produced by nature. The images, together with literary accounts by ancient Greek geographers have given weight to the theory that a great Tartessian city once existed within the park. [Telegraph.co.uk](#)

**Ecuador's Yasuni National Park One of Most Biodiverse Places on Earth:** A team of scientists has documented that Yasuní National Park, in the core of the Ecuadorian Amazon, shatters world records for a wide array of plant and animal groups, from amphibians to trees to insects. The authors also conclude that proposed oil development projects represent the greatest threat to Yasuní and its biodiversity. "This study demonstrates that Yasuní is the most diverse area in South America, and possibly the world," said Dr. Peter English of The University of Texas at Austin. "Amphibians, birds, mammals and vascular plants all reach maximum diversity in Yasuní." The study is published in the open-access scientific journal [PLoS ONE](#). [EurekAlert!](#)

**Some not so “Geographical” News**



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