



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
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**SFU Geographer Warren Gill to Head Western Regional Science Association:** Warren Gill, VP-university relations and a professor of geography at Simon Fraser University, is the new president-elect of the Western Regional Science Association (WRSA). Founded in 1961, the WRSA is an international multidisciplinary group of university scholars and government and private-sector practitioners dedicated to the scientific analysis of geographic regions. [SFU.ca](http://SFU.ca)

**U Toronto's Jack Haworth on Neoliberalism:** Jack Haworth, associate professor in the Department of Geography and Urban Planning at the University of Toronto, recently spoke on how Liberals and conservatives alike have increasingly come to see private charities as an antidote to governmental failures. According to Hackworth, faith-based organizations (FBO's) are the most prominent of these private organizations. To assess the media's opinion of faith-based organizations, Hackworth analyzed reports on Habitat for Humanity, a national FBO, in six newspapers in the United States and Canada. Across the board, these newspapers framed FBOs like Habitat for Humanity as solutions to the welfare state. Whether local or national, the FBOs addressed in Hackworth's lecture generally emphasized their independence from the government, perhaps a sign of the American public's loss of faith in the public system itself. [The Bwoq](#)

**U Ottawa's Barrie Wellar Comments on Benefits of LRT in Hamilton:** The prospect of light-rail transit for Hamilton is about much more than moving people from place to place. For many, it's about moving the city itself. Terry Cooke, former regional chair of Hamilton-Wentworth who now heads the Hamilton Community Foundation, believes light-rail could transform Hamilton. Barry Wellar, a retired University of Ottawa geography professor, says he would give an F to any student who argued that LRT automatically brings economic renewal. "Light rail does not bring magic. It hasn't happened anywhere in the world." He says in many cases taxpayers pay for the system and developers and land speculators cash in. All the pieces have to be in place to ensure broad renewal. That includes drastically containing urban sprawl and allowing higher densities in the transit corridor. [The Hamilton Spectator](#)

**SFU's Valerie Crook Concludes Family Palliative Caregivers Need More Compassion:** More compassion needed—that's the conclusion of a [four-year study](#) of Canada's Compassionate Care Benefit (CCB) program coauthored by Simon Fraser University researcher Valorie Crooks. The CCB program is designed to assist individuals and family caregivers who deal with the terminally ill, but it doesn't go far enough to recognize the challenges family caregivers face, says Crooks, a geography assistant professor specializing in medical issues. The study calls for increases to financial assistance and the length of the support period in certain cases, as well as an extension of paid leave after death to include time for bereavement. Researchers say such changes would better reflect the real costs and challenges of the palliative process. [SFU Media Release](#)

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**Okanagan College's Stephanie Bunclark Turns DC-21 Zone Decision into Teaching Tool:** The halting progress of Kelowna's city council toward the controversial CD-21 zone decision has been turned into a class lesson by a local geography professor. "It's like a living laboratory," says Dr. Stephanie Bunclark, whose second year Urban Geography students at Okanagan College have been following the details through local media. "I've asked them to look at it from various ways, what changes they might want to see or if they thought it was okay as it was," said Bunclark, who thinks there is a disconnect between who is designing the CD-21 zone and who could end up living there. "I don't think students are a demographic that was well represented at any kind of public hearing, but they are also the people that may eventually move into these places, as they get older." [Kelowna.com](http://Kelowna.com)

**UBC's Ian McKendry Examines Health Impact of Waste Incinerator:** A geography professor says building a waste incinerator in Metro Vancouver could have serious health consequences for people in the Fraser Valley. UBC's Ian McKendry was asked by the Fraser Valley Regional District to examine the impact of the proposed incinerator. He says the amount of pollution produced by the plant may seem relatively small, but the trend is a concern. "In a decade or two we're going to be looking at situations where perhaps incinerators and other sources in the Lower Fraser Valley are the tipping point that take us over the kinds of thresholds that have impacts on human health." McKendry says the sensitive air-shed is already strained by global climate change and air pollution produced by other countries. [News1130](http://News1130) | [examiner.com](http://examiner.com)

**U Lethbridge's Jim Byrne Criticizes Cuts to Water Quality Monitoring:** With \$17.5 million less in its coffers in the last budget, Alberta Environment should look for other ways to make up for the shortfall rather than reducing water quality monitoring. "It's disappointing, particularly since they don't specify anything about where they're cutting," said Jim Byrne, a University of Lethbridge geography professor with expertise in water and environmental change. Byrne admits there's some logic to the idea of cutting back on water quality monitoring in areas where problems are limited. But the best case scenario would be to maintain a vital service regardless of the economic situation. "We have kind of an inappropriate approach to dealing with a lot of this monitoring anyway," Byrne said. "That's kind of putting the fox in charge of the hen house." [Lethbridge Herald](http://LethbridgeHerald)

**U Guelph Graduate Student Tristan Pearce Examines Implications for Climate Change in Western Canadian Arctic:** U of G student Tristan Pearce, a PhD candidate and Vanier Scholar in the Department of Geography, was featured in a [Toronto Star](http://TorontoStar) story and accompanying video. As an associate researcher with the University's Global Environmental Change Group, Pearce has been conducting a study in Ulukhaktok, a small coastal Inuit community on the west coast of Victoria Island, analyzing the vulnerabilities of the people and their livelihoods to climate change. He is working with geography professor Barry Smit. Last May, Pearce received one of U of G's inaugural Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships, the most prestigious doctoral awards in Canada. He is using his Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council-supported award to examine the transmission of environmental knowledge and land skills among Inuit in adaptation to climate change. [U Guelph News](http://UGuelphNews) | [Exchange](http://Exchange)

**UWO's Phil Stooke Solves a 37-Year Old Space Mystery:** A researcher from the University of Western Ontario has helped solve a 37-year old space mystery using lunar images released by NASA and maps from his own atlas of the moon. Using his atlas and the NASA images, Phil Stooke, a professor cross in the Department of Geography, pinpointed the exact location of the Russian rover Lunokhod 2, discovering tracks left by the lunar sampler 37 years ago after it made a 35-km trek. The journey was the longest any robotic rover has ever been driven on another celestial body. It's possible to trace the rover's activities. We can see where it measured the magnetic field, driving back and forth over the same route to improve the data," he said. [SifyNews](http://SifyNews)

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**The Local Food Revolution - Sarah Elton and Geographer Pierre Desrochers Take Questions:** GlobeLife asks “Does it matter whether our carrots come from Canada or California?”. Globe and Mail readers are invited to bring their questions to the table as experts Sarah Elton and Geographer Pierre Desrochers continue their debate in a live discussion Thursday at noon ET. Pierre Desrochers is Associate Professor of Geography at the University of Toronto. His main research interests are economic development, business-environment interactions and energy and food policy. He maintains a detailed website here. [GlobeLife](#)

**UVic Graduate Ellen Hines (PhD 2002) Explains How Geography Goes High-Tech with a New Master's Program at San Francisco State University:** or Ellen Hines maps the habitats of threatened dolphins off the coast of Thailand, she uses geographical information systems -- sophisticated database technology -- to link the distribution of dolphin populations to such water properties as depth, salinity and how cloudy or opaque the water is. Hines is an expert in geographic information science (GIScience), an emerging field of study that combines aspects of geography, cartography and computing. It encompasses the development and use of geographic information systems, remote sensing, global positioning systems (GPS) and spatial statistics. To meet the growing demand for highly-skilled analysts capable of working with these tools, SF State has launched a new Master of Science in geographic information science. [SF State News](#)

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#### **New Online in [The Canadian Geographer](#)**

Shlomo Angel, Jason Parent, and Daniel L. Civco. [Ten compactness properties of circles: measuring shape in geography](#). DOI: 10.1111/j.1541-0064.2009.00304.x

Richard Florida, Charlotta P.A. Mellander, and Kevin M. Stolarick. [Talent, technology and tolerance in Canadian regional development](#). DOI: 10.1111/j.1541-0064.2009.00293.x

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#### **Geographer of the Week: Dr. Beverley Mullings, Queen's University**

Dr. [Beverley Mullings](#) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography at Queen's University. Beverley completed a BA degree in Geography and Economics at UWI- Mona, an MSc degree in Urban and Regional Planning Studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science, and a PhD degree in Geography at McGill University. Prior to coming to Queen's University she held an Associate Professor position at Syracuse University.

Beverley's research focuses generally on issues related to globalization, economic restructuring, gender transformations in work and social justice in developing countries. More specifically, her research focuses on the specific institutional configurations of capital, labour and the state that produce gendered forms of economic injustice. Two broad themes currently defines her research: how changes in the spatial organization of production and consumption are transforming the local institutions that regulate social relations; and, how local institutions, in turn, are reconfiguring, contesting and disrupting the re-organization of production and consumption.

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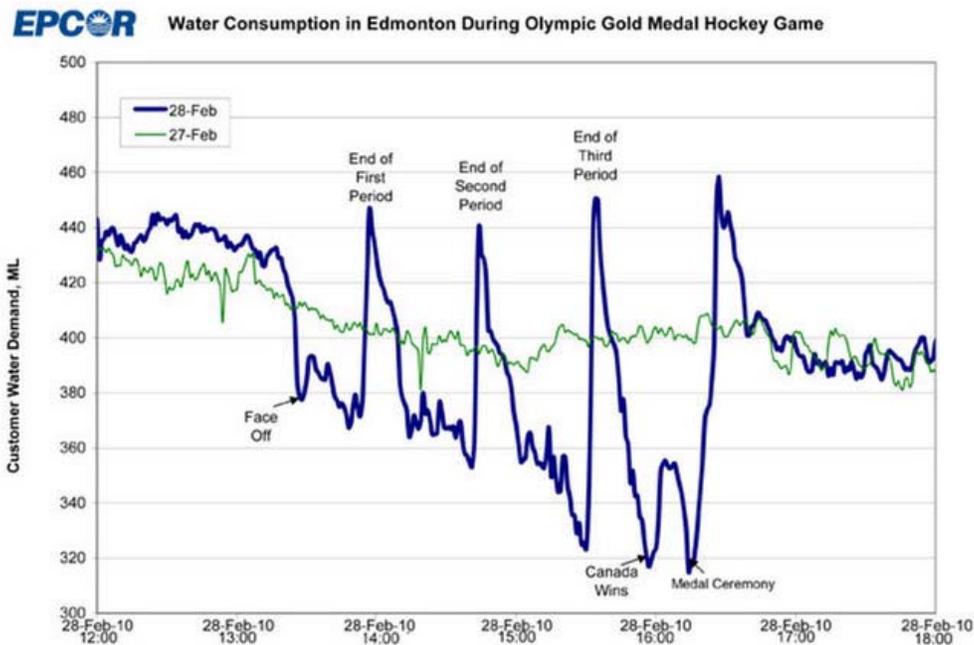
## Other “Geographical” News

**National Geographic Puts McGill Hydrographer on the Map:** Bernhard Lehner is a hydrographer whose work is about to go global. Fusing the fields of hydrology and cartography, he has created a one-of-a-kind map of the world's rivers that is included as a pull-out in the April 2010 “Fresh Water” Issue of National Geographic. “It confirms that geography contributes to issues that the public is interested in ... That it's important beyond academia.” He added: “National Geographic usually produces very colourful maps. This one's nearly monochromatic...A little bit of text, no photos, no images. Their designers insisted that the rivers alone be the focus. We've never had a proper look at the rivers globally in good quality before. And now we have.” [McGill Reporter](#)

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## Some not so “Geographical” News

**Collective Flushing – a measure of nationalism:** The water utility company in Edmonton, Canada, has published a graph showing water consumption (read: toilet flushes) during the Olympic gold medal hockey game versus the United States. The finding: yes, everyone got up to use the restrooms in between the three periods of the game. The shock value: yes, all that simultaneous flushing shows up in a big way on a usage chart.



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