



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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UNBC's Greg Halseth Speaks on Economic Growth and Development Issues: University of Northern BC geography professor Greg Halseth, Canada Research Chair of Rural and Small Town studies recently spoke on economic growth and development issues at the College of the Rockies. Halseth there are ways to inspire communities to look at their core economic values and regional assets to decide what direction to go in the future. "That would allow us to work in partnership to create a future for our children and grandchildren." As the economic cycle has changed over the years, many resource-based communities have been forced to "re-invent" themselves to keep their economies going, he said. Old mining towns like Kimberley and Fernie have done by becoming tourist and resort destinations while others have become education and health care centres like Cranbrook. [The Townsman](#)

Queen's Geographer Kirsten Greer Wins AAG Historical Geography Specialty Group 2010-2011 Student Paper Award Competition: The winner of this year's Andrew Hill Clark award is Kirsten Greer, for her paper "Henry G. Vennor's Our Birds of Prey (1876): A natural history museum in 'miniature' in the Dominion of Canada." The judges felt that this elegantly written paper on Canadian ornithology was a well-illustrated and well-argued analysis of natural history's relationship to nationalism and imperialism. Extensive empirical work shines in the paper, and its strong argument is linked well to various debates in human geography. Kirsten presented this paper at the [2010 Animals and Animality conference](#) in Kingston, Ontario.

McGill U's Navin Ramankutty Feeding the World Without Destroying the Planet: Geography professor Navin Ramankutty is creating maps of where crop are growing using data gathered from both satellite images and sources like the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization. Ramankutty's research lies at the intersection of agriculture and climate change. And his goal is no less than to contribute to solving the problem of global hunger by mapping current agricultural land use along with its impacts on climate change and the environment. People are front and centre in Ramankutty's current research project, which involves the laborious task of producing a global map of changing agricultural land use that goes all the way back to the 1700s. The detailed global maps he and his students have created are as precise as the county level in some places in the world. [McGill Reporter](#)

Queen's Geographer Nathaniel Lewis Wins AAG Sexuality and Space Student Paper Competition: A paper written by Nathaniel Lewis "Segmented Journeys of Moving Out as Coming Out: A Study of Gay Men in Two National Capitals" placed first in the Sexuality and Space Student Paper Competition. Dr. Eric Olund of the University of Sheffield writes "The paper is a well-written and precisely argued empirically based intervention into the literature on the relationship between identity formation and space which convincingly critiques overly teleological understandings of the coming out narrative".

SFU's Eugene McCann Participates in Public consultation on higher buildings in Vancouver's Chinatown: Public consultation on a proposal to allow higher buildings in Vancouver's Chinatown was among the issues that continued to dominate a public hearings. Council heard from about 20 speakers as they met for a third night on the proposal to relax building height restrictions in parts of Chinatown. Simon Fraser University geography professor Eugene McCann said he's concerned the change would encourage the construction of high-end towers and lead to increased property values and rents that would drive out low-income residents. "For us, the real issue is not the size or the shape of the towers, it's the fact that these towers are going to be high-end, and there's going to be a series of economic consequences as a result of that economic change in the neighbourhood," he told council. [Straight.com](#)

York U Geographers at York's Spring Gala Event: The Department of Geography was front and centre at York's 2011 Spring Open House Gala Event. Displays promoting both [Geography BA and BSc](#) degrees and the program in Environmental Science were well received by prospective students. [York U Events](#)

U Toronto's Alana Boland Recognized for Efforts to Provide Barrier-Free Access to Education: Faculty, staff and students were honoured at the 2011 Accessibility Awards for their work to ensure all students with disabilities get what they need to achieve academic success. One recipient was [Alana Boland](#), associate professor and undergraduate co-ordinator in geography and planning. "The purpose of the awards is to recognize and celebrate the everyday ways in which faculty and staff and students foster inclusion through their actions and reflection on how they can remove barriers and open barriers," said Tanya Lewis, director of academic success and accessibility services. [Life at U of T](#)

UWO's Irena Creed Awarded Humanitarian Award from Western: Professor [Irena Creed](#) (Department of Biology, cross appointment with Geography) and her colleagues Charles Trick, Jack Bend and Regna Darnell were recently awarded a Humanitarian Award from Western for their work that examines the ecological factors affecting health in Kenya's Lake Naivasha region, which grew from 19,000 people in 1990 to more than 400,000 today. The award recognizes faculty, staff and students at Western, who are engaged in a range of efforts directed towards improving the quality of life for individuals and groups around the world. [UWO Humanitarian Award](#)

Queen's U's Brian Osborne on Toomey Strait, Antarctica: Capt. Patrick R.M. Toomey, has been put on the map. The Geographical Names Board of Canada has received the approval of the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, to authorize the naming of a body of water on the west coast of the Antarctic Peninsula as "Toomey Strait" on the Danco Coast of the Antarctic Peninsula. It is a remarkable honour. Capt. Toomey is only the second Canadian to have his name engraved on the maps and landscape of Antarctica. The honour recognizes him "for his services over many years to safe Antarctic navigation as ice-pilot for expedition vessels and large passenger ships, and for his significant contribution to the knowledge of ice navigation and the education of ice-navigators." [The Kingston Whig Standard](#)

U Waterloo Geography Grad's Movie Documents '100 Days' of Drama on the Yukon River: Floating down the Yukon River on a 48-foot raft, Brett Rogers expected an adventure or two. He got more than he bargained. On one day, the changeable river would strand the homemade raft; the next day it would hurl it into low-hanging branches along the shore. And late one night, the crew discovered a body under the raft. The documentary he made will air in May on the Outdoor Life Network. Rogers is hitting his stride. He was recently made a member of The Explorers Club, a U.S.-based professional society started in 1904. It's an honour he shares with walk on the moon, and Wade Davis of Canada, an ethnographer, writer and filmmaker who is also Rogers' friend. [The Record.com](#)

Geographer of the Week: Dr. Brian Branfireun, University of Western Ontario

Dr. [Brian Branfireun](#) completed his PhD at McGill University in Montreal, under the supervision of Dr. Nigel Roulet. Brian is currently Associate Professor, Canada Research Chair in Environment and Sustainability at the University of Western Ontario. He is cross-appointed in the departments of Biology, Earth Sciences and [Geography](#). He maintains a status appointment at the University of Toronto at Mississauga, Department of Geography.

Taking an interdisciplinary environmental science approach, Brian and his students seek to understand of the bidirectional nature of hydrological – ecological interactions at a range of scales. They direct their efforts toward ecosystems that are particularly sensitive to the impacts of natural and human-induced environmental change. Brian has [research projects](#) on wetlands and mercury cycling from the Canadian sub-arctic to the sub-tropics of Mexico.

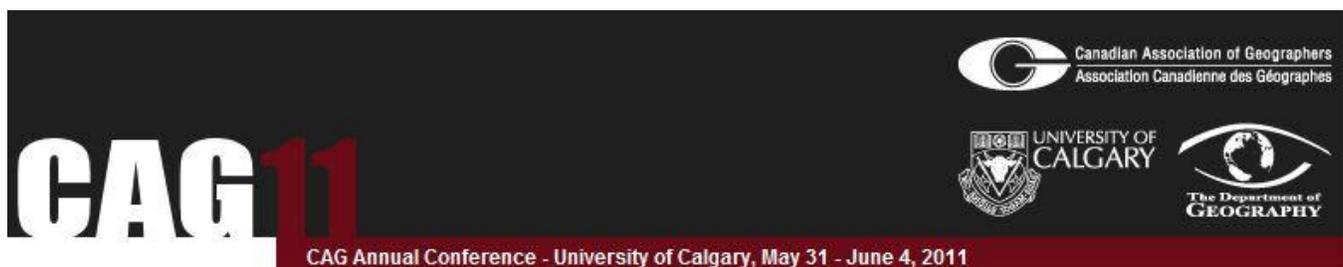
Outside of the University, Brian serves as the President for the Canadian Geophysical Union - Hydrology Section, is the Canadian National Correspondent for Water Quality with the International Association of Hydrological Sciences, and is a host scientist for the 10th International Conference on Mercury as a Global Pollutant to be held in 2011 in Halifax, Canada.

Claire J. Oswald, Murray C. Richardson and Brian A. Branfireun. 2011. [Water storage dynamics and runoff response of a boreal Shield headwater catchment](#). Hydrological Processes. DOI: 10.1002/hyp.8036

Tim Duval, Jame M. Waddington and Brian A. Branfireun. 2010. [Towards calcareous wetland creation in flooded abandoned aggregate quarries: A 3-year field mesocosm study](#). Ecological Engineering 36(4):586-595.

Murray C. Richardson, Carl P. Mitchell, Brian A. Branfireun and Randall K. Kolka. 2010. [Analysis of airborne LiDAR surveys to quantify the characteristic morphologies of northern forested wetlands](#). Journal of Geophysical Research – Biogeosciences 115, G03005. DOI: 10.1029/2009JG000972

[CAG 2011 Calgary: Our Legacy, Our Future](#): The University of Calgary Geography Department is hosting the CAG's 2011 annual conference and meeting, May 31 - June 4, 2011. UofC Geography is also celebrating 50 years of research, teaching and service, and the Department of Earth Sciences - Geography Program at Mount Royal University is celebrating 100 years of the school's existence as well as its new University status. It's a great time to look at what Geographers have accomplished, look at the big and small changes, and celebrate the New Geographies emerging today.



Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Philip Antwi-Agyei, Evan D.G. Fraser, Andrew J. Dougill, Lindsay C. Stringer and Elisabeth Simelton. 2011. [Mapping the vulnerability of crop production to drought in Ghana using rainfall, yield and socioeconomic data](#). University of Leeds Sustainability Research Institute Paper No. 25. Centre for Climate Change Economics and Policy Working Paper No. 55. Leeds, LS2 9JT, United Kingdom.

Thomas E. Barchyn, Chris H. Hugenholtz, and Jean T. Ellis. 2011. [A call for standardization of aeolian process measurements: moving beyond relative case studies](#). Earth Surface Processes and Landforms. DOI: 10.1002/esp.2136

Jim Glassman. 2011. [The geo-political economy of global production networks](#). Geography Compass. DOI: 10.1111/j.1749-8198.2011.00416.x

Jamie Peck. 2011. [Global policy models, globalizing poverty management: international convergence or fast-policy integration?](#) Geography Compass. DOI: 10.1111/j.1749-8198.2011.00417.x

Claus Rinner, Byron Moldofsky, Michael D. Cusimano, Sean Marshall, and Tony Hernandez. 2011. [Exploring the boundaries of web map services: the example of the online injury atlas for Ontario](#). Transactions in GIS. DOI: 10.1111/j.1467-9671.2011.01247.x

Recent Theses and Dissertations

Liliana Perez. 2011. Approaches for modeling spatial dynamics of forest insect disturbance: the integration of GIScience, complex systems theory and swarming intelligence. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia. Supervisor: Suzana Dragičević.

Other “Geographical” News

Geography Gaffe was no Laughing Matter: During a 35-year career in high school education in the Greater Montreal area, I observed many students struggle with the most basic of geographic concepts. Regrettably, the dearth of topographical comprehension usually impinged on other subjects as well, particularly history. In order to assess their basic knowledge of the continent upon which they lived, I would ask the pupils to place numbers on where the following were, more or less, found on the map: Montreal, the St. Lawrence River, Newfoundland, Lake Superior, British Columbia, the Rocky Mountains, Saskatchewan, Hudson Bay, Florida, and California. Interestingly, by far and away the two geographic entities most scholars were successful at accurately situating on the outline map were Florida and California. Many were embarrassingly unable to locate their own city (Montreal) on the map and, in general, did quite poorly on the entire pedagogical exercise. [The Westmount Examiner](#)

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