



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
**No. 150. November 21, 2011**  
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**U Alberta's Merle Patchett Watches Canada's Strip Malls Crumble Toward Extinction:** The first time cultural geographer Merle Patchett saw Edmonton's sprawl from the airplane, she felt the culture shock shared by so many European immigrants to the Prairie city. Crumbling, tacky and unloved, the bland 1950s-era strip mall remains the scourge of developers and urban planners alike. This month, Ms. Patchett, a native of Glasgow, Scotland, and the University of Alberta's City Region Studies Centre have launched Strip Appeal. It's a contest calling on designers, architects — anyone really — to retrofit the much-maligned strip mall for the future. [National Post](#)

**U Waterloo and Guelph Grad Nicole Sullivan Joins South Dundas Community:** Nicole Sullivan is the new Economic Development Officer for the South Dundas community. She received her undergraduate degree from the University of Waterloo where she majored in human geography and minored in business and tourism. According to Sullivan, she "went into geography because it was a little more of a broad focus." As for her Masters degree, Sullivan went to the University of Guelph where she produced a thesis entitled "Immigration Attraction and Retention for Small Towns and Rural Areas." In choosing South Dundas as her new home for both work and personal life, she admitted that she's "always been attracted to small towns and rural areas." [The Leader](#)

**UWO's Gordon McBean Warns Adapt to Extreme Weather or Pay Price:** Gordon McBean is a professor of geography and political science at the University of Western Ontario in London, Ont., and the director of policy studies at the Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction. McBean notes that "Canada, on average, is getting warmer. We're also seeing more heavy-precipitation events and these are having economic and social impacts on Canadians as individuals and on our society overall." McBean says that what Canadians should take away from the latest IPCC report is a realization that we need to work harder not just to reduce greenhouse gas emissions so that the kinds of trends identified in the report don't get worse but to begin adapting our infrastructure so that it is better able to withstand the impacts of severe weather events. [CBC News](#)

**UBC's Simon Donner Provides Recommendations for Annual Climate Change Aid:** three UBC professors – Simon Donner, Milind Kandlikar and Hisham Zerriffi – argue that the aid commitment made by developed nations at last year's United Nations climate conference is unprecedented and that the world must learn from the troubled history of international development to ensure that countries meet the commitment and provide real actions on the ground. "Climate change is expected to have a much greater impact on people in the developing world, even though they are least responsible for the problem," says Donner, an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and faculty associate in the Liu Institute for Global Issues at UBC. "This funding is critically important. We need to make sure the money is provided and supports real action." [UBC Media Release](#) | [Calgary Herald](#)

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**Trent U's Mark Skinner Debunks Rural Myths and Gets Students into the Field:** With an aging Canadian population and fears of ballooning healthcare costs, political parties from both ends of the political spectrum have embraced voluntarism as a potential solution to budget shortfalls. Whether from the conservative notion of limited government or the social democratic ideal of grassroots community empowerment, both sides view volunteers and voluntary organizations as key pieces of the healthcare puzzle. But according to Dr. Mark Skinner, a health, rural and social geographer, neither side has a critical perspective of what voluntarism is nor how it works. Prof. Skinner's work brings him and his students into close contact with the communities they study. "Geography tends to be more applied," he explains. "The applied nature of geography, whether it's human or physical geography, comes out of a real tradition of field-based natural and social science that's made us different from other disciplines. Geographers need to go to where the populations they are studying live; they have to go to where the processes they are studying actually take place. If you don't want to get your boots dirty," he adds, "then this probably isn't the discipline for you." [Trent Daily News](#)

**UWO's Janet Loebach and Sarah McCans Making Clean Air a Matter of Child's Play:** Janet Loebach and Sarah McCans hope clean air around one schoolyard will be child's play. As PhD students working out of the Human Environments Analysis Lab (Geography) at Western, Loebach and McCans are adding a community 'greening' project for a London elementary school to their already busy academic schedules. And through a recent grant from the London Community Foundation, the duo have a great head start in making one schoolyard a healthier place to play. [Western News](#)

**Memorial U's Arn Keeling Attends International Workshop at Trent Exploring Environmental History of Northern Canada:** An international workshop on the environmental history of northern Canada recently took place at Trent University. Fifteen historians from across Canada including Arn Keeling of Memorial University, the United States, and Great Britain participated in two days of active conversation and exchange of insights. The workshop was funded by NiCHE: the Network in Canadian History and Environment, and by the Yukon Research Centre of Yukon College. An edited volume is scheduled to be published by the University of Calgary Press in Spring 2013. [Trent Daily News](#)

**SFU's Hosts the Canadian Association of Planning Students Annual Conference Feb. 2-4, 2012:** The CAPS 2012 Annual Conference is being hosted by Simon Fraser University's School of Resource and Environmental Management at their Downtown campus in Vancouver, BC. The theme for the conference this year is 'Planning Horizons: The Edge, Future, and Potential of Planning'. The conference will provide students with the opportunity to give oral or poster presentations and explore Metro Vancouver on a variety of mobile tours while networking with graduate and undergraduate students, faculty, and professionals from across Canada and the Pacific Northwest. Prizes will be awarded to those students recognized by their peers as giving the top presentations. The conference also features prominent keynote presentations by Larry Beasley, Julian Agyeman, and Gordon Price. Early bird registration (until Dec. 26th) is only \$69! [CAPS 2012 in Vancouver](#)

**UVic Geography Students Use Field Schools to Make Difference:** Field schools make a difference in students' lives and change the way they see the world, taking them outside the classroom to deepen their understanding of community dynamics, and to help them see opportunities to make their own communities stronger. Spending four weeks in India working with the Society for Participatory Research in Asia made an impression on 20 UVic undergraduate students. The students, along with professor Dr. Phil Dearden and graduate student Crystal Tremblay, learned about local issues of female foeticide, women's empowerment, community governance, tiger conservation and resource management in the India. [Victoria Times Colonist](#)

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**U Alberta's Duane Froese is Solving Mammoth Ice Age Mysteries:** University of Alberta scientist Duane Froese was on sabbatical last summer when he got a call from a Yukon miner who wanted to give him the heads up about a site he planned to excavate. As much as Froese had vowed that he was going to stay home last summer, his wife knew that he wouldn't be able to resist when Beets told him about the ancient wedge of permafrost he planned to dig into. Froese had been eyeing it for years. Shortly before he arrived on the scene, his team had already unearthed some woolly mammoth bones that Beets had exposed. The fossil that stood out the most, however, was the skull of a horse that had lived in the Arctic during the last Ice Age. "The fossils of horses like these show up rarely in North America," says Froese. "To have some that are incredibly preserved in permafrost, and the chance to directly date them, is really significant. It was exciting to see more of these horses at a site where we could get a potentially rich record of the environment they were part of." [Edmonton Journal](#)

**Memorial U's Alistair Bath Argues Human Management Critical for Managing Wildlife:** We talk about wildlife management, but really we should talk about people management," said Alistair Bath, a professor of geography with Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland. [Slave River Journal](#)

**Brock U's Alun Hughes Says Plenty of Truth to Laura Secord Story:** A dramatic slog through a swamp? Nope. Run-ins with American sentries? Don't bet on it. A creek crossing by way of a downed tree? Maybe, maybe not. But don't let that diminish the legacy of Laura Secord, said Brock University associate professor Alun Hughes. Her legendary walk from Queenston to the DeCew House to warn the British of an American attack really happened, he said. Not only that, it was critical in winning the ensuing Battle of Beaverdams, even if the details along the way are mired in family myths and tales gleaned from who knows where. "Laura made the trek," Hughes said. "She deserves the credit, and is a true Canadian hero." Hughes, a geography professor who has studied Secord extensively, has retraced her footsteps through old petitions, newspapers and histories from ages past. He's plotted out what he believes is the route of her trek. [The Standard](#)

**UBC's David Ley Defends Multiculturalism at Conference:** The most useful address came from David Ley, a UBC geography professor, who defended Canadian multiculturalism against several accusations — notably that it forces people into ethnic enclaves. Firstly, he argued, ethnic enclaves aren't all bad: In them, immigrants learn how to solve problems; they build a sense of trust and "solidarity"; and often find their first job. There's no evidence adults are "trapped" there. Secondly: Ethnic enclaves exist in all countries, so Canadian policy can't very well be uniquely responsible. "Whenever there are sustained high levels of immigration, channelled to just a few urban centres, segregation is the result and it always will be," Mr. Ley said. "There was more immigrant segregation in Chicago's melting pot between 1880 and 1930 than in multicultural Toronto or Vancouver in the past decade. And in both time periods, both immigrants lived outside ethnic concentrations than inside." [National Post](#)

**UVic Geography Graduate Taylor Bachrach New Mayor of Smithers:** Taylor Bachrach holds an honours BSc in Geography from the University of Victoria. He volunteers extensively in Smithers and the Bulkley Valley. He is currently chair of the Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board and a director of the Driftwood Foundation. For the past three years, Taylor has served as a municipal councillor in the Village of Telkwa. He has volunteered with the Bulkley Valley Credit Union since 2006 and is involved in the Smithers Public Library. Taylor was just elected the new mayor of Smithers in the recent municipal elections held in British Columbia. [Smithers Interior News](#)

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## Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

David Butz. 2011. [The Bus Hub – Editor's preface](#). ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies, 2011, 10 (2), 278-279

Vanessa Dantas É Sá and Charles Mather. 2011. [Ilha de Moçambique: Conserving and managing world heritage in the developing world](#). Tourism Review International 15(1-2):51-62.

K.-K. Kang, C.R. Duguay and S.E. L. Howell. 2011. [Estimating ice phenology on large northern lakes from AMSR-E: algorithm development and application to Great Bear Lake and Great Slave Lake, Canada](#). The Cryosphere Discussion 5:3129–3173

Krithi K. Karanth and Sanjay K. Nepal. 2011. [Local residents perception of benefits and losses from protected areas in India and Nepal](#). Environmental Management. DOI: 10.1007/s00267-011-9778-1

Leonora Angeles. 2011. [Feminist demands, dilemmas, and dreams in introducing participatory action research in a Canada-Vietnam capacity-building project](#). In: [Feminist Community Research](#). Edited by Creese, G. and Frisby, W. UBC Press, Vancouver. 37-57.

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## **Other “Geographical” News**

### **Government of Canada Launches New Grants to Support Community-Based Research Partnerships:**

The new CU-I2I Grants feature \$12 million over five years in funding for successful college-university-business partnerships. Awards will be up to \$250,000 per year for both college and university applicants, with business partners matching this contribution in cash and/or in kind. Awards can span up to three years. The competition is open—teams comprised of colleges, universities and businesses can apply for these grants at any time. [NSERC Media Room](#)

**Academic Writing: Why does it have to be so Dull and Stilted?** Higher education is about learning, but we do ourselves – and our students – no favours by writing arcane tripe that obscures rather than illuminates, writes lecturer James Derounian. Shouldn't academic writing be open to change and progression, to move with the times without – of course – losing precious rigour? The status quo is reinforced by the blind reviewing of articles by those who know the convention, expect certain styles and approaches and enforce these. Not to mention the time delay. Can it be right or acceptable that in an age of 24/7 communication you submit an article, wait months for feedback and then – in the happy event that the revised work is accepted – the article is finally published maybe a year later. [The Guardian](#)

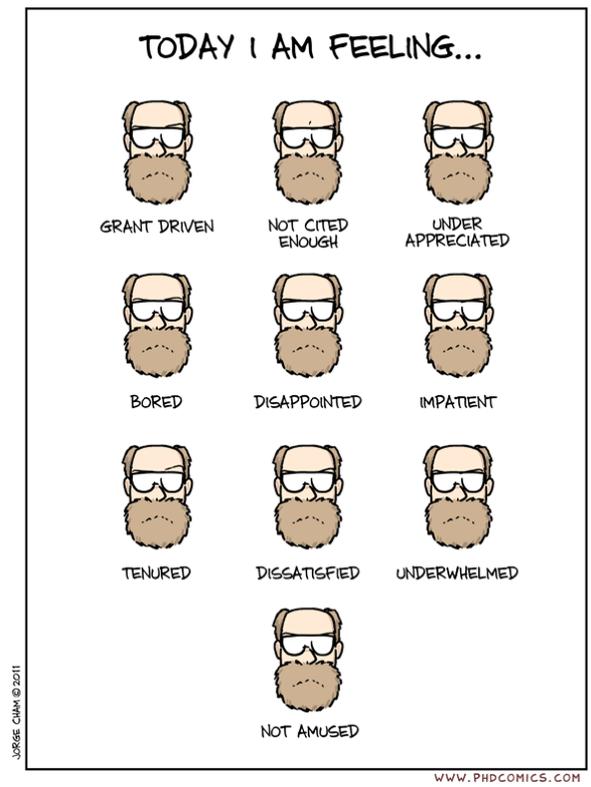
**Origins of Antarctica's Ghost Mountains Unraveled:** Buried below more than a mile of ice, Antarctica's Gamburtsev Mountains have baffled scientists since their discovery in 1958. An international team of scientists flew over Antarctica's deep interior in 2008-2009 with ice-penetrating radar, gravity meters and magnetometers to reveal the peaks and valleys hidden below the ice. The data they gathered has provided insight into how the mountains arose. One billion years ago, before animals or plants appeared on land, several continents collided and the oldest rocks that make up the Gamburtsevs smashed together. From the collision, a thick crustal root formed deep beneath the mountain range. [ScienceDaily](#) | [BBC News](#)

**San Francisco Aerial Photographs 1938:** Have you ever wanted to fly over San Francisco in the year 1938? Recently, the David Rumsey Historical Map Collection website digitized 164 large format, black and white, vertical aerial photographs taken by Harrison Ryker, a pioneer in aerial photography. Visitors can zoom in to see such details as the paint striping on a basketball court, peer out over the Ferry Terminal Building, the long-gone Mission Bay Roundhouse, and Hunters Point. [David Rumsey Map Collection](#)

**UNESCO's Geoparks "Clarify" Geotourism:** In a major step forward, an International Congress in Arouca, northern Portugal, has just decided what "geotourism" means. It's been an issue. Geographers and geologists usually get along. The two fields are so closely related that universities may put them in the same department. They share the same prefix, geo-, from the Greek, ge, Earth. And that's where the confusion started. For the past 10 years or so, two different meanings for the neologism "geotourism" have both been growing in acceptance—in different parts of the world, for different reasons. [National Geographic Daily News](#)

**New York City Apartment Building Living, 1880s-1910s:** This digital collection from the New York Public Library brings together 1300 images that depict elevation views and floor plans for middle and upper-class apartment buildings from the city's pre-World War I residential building boom. The materials include items, diagrams, and photographs from volumes like 1908's "Apartment houses of the metropolis" and "Modern plumbing, no.6." from 1911. [NYPL Digital Gallery](#)

### Some not so "Geographical" News



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