



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 180, June 16, 2012
Compiled by Dan Smith [<cag@geog.uvic.ca>](mailto:cag@geog.uvic.ca)

Ryerson U's Shuguang Wang on the Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Mall: When 2001 and 2006 census data showed a sharp rise in Chinese and South Asian populations in particular GTA communities, a seed was planted in the minds of developers: ethnic consumers would want megamalls tailored to their community. But a boom in planned development from 2005 to 2010 hasn't materialized. While Chinese immigrants have flocked to Markham and Richmond Hill and South Asians have created suburban ethnic enclaves in Scarborough, Mississauga and Brampton, the customer bases for these types of Asian megamalls is shrinking, says Shuguang Wang, a Ryerson University geography professor who has studied Chinese commercial activity. "The younger generation of immigrants are attracted to the mainstream [malls] because of the selection, because of the price, because of the after-sale service," he said. While Markham's Pacific Mall might have been the go-to destination a decade ago, now many Chinese-Canadians flock to big-box retailers instead, Dr. Wang said. [Globe and Mail](#)

Brock U's Alun Hughes on American Surrender in War of 1812: The bloody ghosts of history are served up on Lundy's Lane these days with doughnuts, pizza and seafood. Where once the Battle of Lundy's Lane raged, today little more remains than memory. Unless you know it was a battlefield, you might overlook the old war zone on the cemetery behind the church, as you drive past the Red Lobster on the corner, the Pizza Pizza, the nearby motel. Not a lot remains of the east Thorold battlefield, in which Laura Secord's famous warning allowed the British to trounce an American force heading for the DeCew House. It ended in an American surrender among a row of trees a Brock University professor figures is still intact. That's the theory of geography professor Alun Hughes, who has studied the history of Thorold. He pegs the site of the surrender at a tree-lined plot in front of the former AbitibiBowater plant on the Welland Canal. That part, at least, looks like a battlefield. And a sharp eye might even spot a heap of rubble that John Burtniak, who chairs Thorold's 1812 bicentennial committee, said is likely the wreck of George Miller's farm. The rest? Much of it is at the bottom of the third and fourth Welland Canals. [St. Catharines Standard](#)

Research by UBC's Daniel Hiebert Noted in Report Describing How Working in Ethnic Enclaves Limits Newcomers' Opportunities: Immigrants who work in ethnic "enclaves" in major cities earn less than other Canadians and have a tougher time adapting to this country's economy, according to an internal federal government document. The report focused on concerns within Citizenship and Immigration Canada about the ability of program nominees in some provinces to speak one of Canada's two official languages. Language proficiency plays a critical role in the social integration of immigrants and their young children, it said. "It has a direct relationship with newcomers' ability to settle, adapt and integrate into Canadian society." A federal government-funded 2009 research paper by University of British Columbia geography professor Daniel Hiebert, which looked at immigrant enclaves in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, said those areas have higher unemployment levels and that residents are "slightly" more dependent on government transfers. [Canada.com](#)

U Western's Gordon McBean Warns Insurers to Prepare for Domsday-like Weather Conditions:

A not-so-rosy glimpse into Canada's future shows we can expect wilder winds, heftier hailstorms and scorching summers in the decades to come. Dr. Gordon McBean, a geography professor who focuses on climate at Western University was one of the authors of a report entitled *Telling the Weather Story*. The report indicates that Canada has become wetter and hotter in the past several decades — a trend expected to continue for the next half-century and beyond — resulting in more extreme weather events and more insurance claims relating to natural disasters. Based on a 30-year trend of a higher number of hotter days over the summer, the report projects Southern Ontario can expect the average number of days with a maximum temperature above 30 C to increase from 15 in 2005 to 28 in 2050 and the average overall temperature throughout the year in the southern Great Lakes region will rise by three degrees. As for precipitation, the report states rainfall in the winter months will increase by 10 per cent by 2050 in Southern Ontario while it will snow less and the Great Lakes will experience a decrease in wintertime ice cover. The report concludes that all levels of governments and home and business owners need to adapt existing infrastructure across Canada now "in order to minimize the social and economic costs associated with severe weather." [London Community News.com](http://www.londoncommunitynews.com)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

L. Aubry, A. Assani, S. Biron and D. Gratton. 2012. [Comparison of the hydromorphological evolution of the L'Assomption and Ouareau River Channels \(Quebec, Canada\)](#). River Research and Applications. DOI: 10.1002/rra.2584

Thomas E. Barchyn and Chris H. Hugenholtz. 2012. [Aeolian dune field geomorphology modulates the stabilization rate imposed by climate](#). Journal of Geophysical Research 117(F2), F02035.

S.M. Guenther, R.D. Moore and T. Gomid. 2012. [Riparian microclimate and evaporation from a coastal headwater stream, and their response to partial-retention forest harvesting](#). Agricultural and Forest Meteorology 164:1-9.

Naohiro Nakamura. 2012. [Towards a culturally sustainable environmental impact assessment: the protection of Ainu cultural heritage in the Saru River cultural impact assessment, Japan](#). Geographical Research. DOI: 10.1111/j.1745-5871.2012.00759.x

Andrew D. Nelson and Michael Church. 2012. [Placer mining along the Fraser River, British Columbia: The geomorphic impact](#). Bulletin of the Geological Society of America. doi: 10.1130/B30575.1

Li Shen, Huiping Xu and Xulin Guo. 2012. [Satellite remote sensing of Harmful Algal Blooms \(HABs\) and a potential synthesized framework](#). Sensors 12:7778-7803.

M.A. Moritz, M.-A. Parisien, E. Batllori, M.A. Krawchuk, J. Van Dorn, D.J. Ganz, and K. Hayhoe. 2012. [Climate change and disruptions to global fire activity](#). Ecosphere 3(6):49.

Dylan Simone, John Eyles, K. Bruce Newbold, Peter Kitchen and Allison Williams. 2012. [Air quality in Hamilton: Who is concerned? Perceptions from three neighbourhoods](#). Social Indicators Research. DOI: 10.1007/s11205-012-0064-2Online First™

Peter Vandergeest and Anusorn Unno. 2012. [A new extraterritoriality? Aquaculture certification, sovereignty, and empire. Political Geography](#). doi/10.1016/j.polgeo.2012.05.005

Other “Geographical” News

The Geography of Nature vs. Nurture in Maps: Scientists don't debate the old nature vs. nurture question much these days. The consensus is that there is no winner: Both your genes and your environment shape your development and your health. What's still up in the air is how they combine to put you at risk for diseases or social problems. Now it appears that, even for a single disease or condition, the balance between nature and nurture isn't fixed place to place. That's what researchers are showing with maps that identify hotspots in the U.K. where either genetic or environmental factors dominate. [Shots, NPR's Health Blog](#) | [PsychCentral](#)

The Geography of Abortion in the USA: Few issues divide Americans more severely than abortion. Even accounting for changes in the nation's political climate over time, polling numbers consistently show a close to even split in the percent of the population who identify as pro-life or pro-choice. And given the variation in abortion laws across the 50 states, that divide has a definite geographic dimension as well. With the help of colleagues, Richard Florida took a detailed look at abortion rates across as well as the economic, cultural, and political factors that bear on them. They used two systematic data sets, one from a report released in late 2011 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and another from a 2011 paper from the Guttmacher Institute, the pro-choice women's reproductive health advocacy organization. These data cover both where abortions occurred and the states of residence of the women who obtained them. [The Atlantic Cities](#)

How Geography Shapes Cultural Diversity: One reason that Eurasian civilizations dominated the globe is because they came from a continent that was broader in an east–west direction than north–south, claimed geographer Jared Diamond. Now, a modelling study has found evidence to support this 'continental axis theory'. Continents that span narrower bands of latitude have less variation in climate, which means a set of plants and animals that are adapted to more similar conditions. That is an advantage, says Diamond, because it means that agricultural innovations are able to diffuse more easily, with culture and ideas following suit. As a result, Diamond's hypothesis predicts, along lines of latitude there will be more cultural homogeneity than along lines of longitude. [Nature](#)

Interactive Map Tool for BP Claimants: The BP Settlement in general covers a geographic area encompassing the states of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama and specified counties in Texas and Florida. Geographic location matters when it comes to the BP Settlement. Whether a potential claimant is covered by the BP Settlement at all—that is, whether they are a “class member”—depends on the geographic location of their business, residence or property. Since this issue of geography is so crucial to claim processing, an interactive map tool has been developed to assist claimants in identifying to which zone their claim belongs. By simply inputting a street address, potential claimants can determine whether they are covered by the BP Settlement, and if so, which of the four Economic Loss or Real Property Damage zones they are in. Alternatively, claimants can use latitude and longitude information or simply browse the map for their location and zone. [Deepwater Horizon Settlement Mapping Tool](#)

How Much Time Do Academics Spend Reading the Literature? JISC Collections funded a study to examine the values of libraries to UK academics. The result “UK Scholarly Reading and the Value of Library Resources: Summary Results of the Study Conducted Spring 2011” has been published. From p. 8, “Of the 448 hours per year spent on scholarly reading, the average academic staff member spends 187 hours reading library-provided material, confirming the value of the library's collections.” [UK Scholarly Reading](#)

Some not so “Geographical” News

National Geographic Magazine as an 'Instrument Of Doom': It wasn't long ago when you could visit the attic or basement of most any home in North America and find stacks of yellow-spined back-issues of *The National Geographic Magazine*. While there are still avid collectors of the esteemed magazine dedicated to history, science, nature, geography, travel and learning, there are far fewer than in 1974 when a science satire magazine, The [Journal of Irreproducible Results](#), suggested that the sheer weight of all these collected periodicals would lead to the apocalypse.

In the March 1974 issue George H. Kaub wrote the following: *“This continent is in the gravest danger of following legendary Atlantis to the bottom of the sea. No natural disaster, no overpowering compounding of pollutions or cataclysmic nuclear war will cause the end. Instead, a seemingly innocent monster created by man, nurtured by man, however as yet unheeded by man, will doom this continent to the watery grave of oblivion. But there is yet time to save ourselves if this warning is heeded. Publication and distribution of the The National Geography Magazine must be immediately stopped at all costs! This beautiful, educational, erudite, and thoroughly appreciated publication is the heretofore unrecognized instrument of doom which must be erased if we as a country or continent will survive.”*

With his tongue firmly in cheek, Kaub warned of "earthquakes, hurricanes, mud slides, fire, famine, and atomic war all rolled into one" due to the fact that "no copies have been discarded or destroyed since the beginning of publication." You can read Kaub's original letter as well as the equally funny rebuttals from [National Geographic](#) readers on [The Journal of Irreproducible Results website](#).

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