



News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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Compiled by Dan Smith <caq@geog.uvic.ca>

Degrees of uncertainty: Is being a university geography graduate losing its value? You could say Michelle Sutton wasted years at university. She graduated with a geography degree from Simon Fraser University in 1997 but never found a job -related to her field. She went back to Kwantlen Polytechnic University to take an Internet course and began building websites from home. You could also say her geography degree guided Sutton into a shining destiny. In 2002, she moved to Uganda with her husband, Kevin Sutton, to start a furniture-making business. They employ eight full-time people in a thriving operation, ramble through eastern Africa on weekends and shoot stunning wildlife photos. Her friends back home say Sutton's living a dream. She might not be living that dream had she not caught the bug for foreign lands from one of her SFU profs. "I love the real-world application of geography. I enjoy being able to look at landscapes and understand them," says Sutton, 39. "I also have a greater understanding for the social and geographical elements around me, as well as development, culture and economics." The estimated 233,000 people about to start classes at B.C.'s universities this fall might wish to pay attention to Sutton's experience. [The Province](#)

U Guelph's Ze'ev Gedalof comments Yosemite National Park wildfire and impact on giant sequoias: University of Guelph geographer Forest ecology professor Ze'ev Gedalof was interviewed for a story on a wildfire in Yosemite National Park and its impact on giant sequoias by GlobalNews.ca. There has been some concern that the fires could devastate groves of the massive trees, which date back 1,800 years. Gedalof said that the trees have thick bark and few lower branches, making them more fire resistant and likely to withstand the fires. He said that even if the trees did get burned by the fire, seedlings would take root and the sequoias would one day rise again, though without the ecological history of the ancient trees. Gedalof said trees like the giant sequoia act as a window to the distant past, including insights into the changing Earth's atmosphere, mega-droughts, climatic variability, wildfire and even "the rise and fall of civilizations." Not to mention the animals. "Their unusual size provides a range of habitat types for diverse animal species," he explained. "Their cones have evolved a highly unusual trait, edible scales, to which at least three animals have co-evolved a feeding preference." Gedalof says the gelechiid moth, a type of longhorn beetle, and the Douglas squirrel all eat the cone scales of the sequoia, but not the seeds. [Global News](#)

Will climate change make your commute more dangerous? U Waterloo's Jean Andrey has the answer: As our climate changes, flooding, fire, tornadoes and drought likely sit atop many people's list of potential environmental hazards. But those of us who get behind the wheel of a car for our daily trek to the office could be facing an increasingly treacherous commute according to University of Waterloo Geography and Environmental Management (GEM) professor Jean Andrey. Andrey, who has been with GEM for 24 years and also serves as Environment's Associate Dean of Graduate Studies, is an expert on weather and society – especially how weather, in combination with other variables, affects road safety in Canada. Not surprisingly, the two greatest environmental risks for the average driver are reduced friction and impaired visibility. “Of course precipitation does both to different degrees,” says Andrey. And while driving in the rain and snow is nothing new for Canadians, climate change is likely to result in some surprises for motorists. It is a complex problem requiring more than just knowing how much more precipitation there will be. Each region has a different mix of vehicles and types of roads. For instance, recommendations for an urban intersection in Vancouver will be different than a rural highway in southwestern Ontario. The climate change genie cannot be put back in the bottle, so policy must be part of the solution. “One of the things that a few jurisdictions in the world have implemented is a differential speed limit for rain or for snow,” she says. “Just drop it 10 km per hour when you've got inclement weather.” [U Waterloo Environment](#)

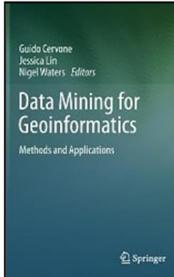
McMaster U's Derek Ford discusses sink holes on CBC Radio: If you're certain your feet are on solid ground, you may want to reconsider. In Florida sinkholes are more common than hurricanes, but scientists find it's far easier to forecast weather than to predict where the earth may open up. And it's not just Florida, Canada has it's own problems with sudden and hungry shifts in the earth. Derek Ford is a professor emeritus at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario and a highly-influential Canadian geomorphologist. A book he co-authored is considered definitive by those who work on sinkhole science. And it's a science he's studied for five decades. [CBC – the current](#)

U Calgary's Christopher Hugenholtz challenges theory that water exists on Mars: University of Calgary geographer Christopher Hugenholtz has lent his expertise to a NASA research project, which challenges the widely circulated theory that water exists on Mars. The concept of water on Mars has spread throughout academic circles and the media in the past decade. Part of the theory is based on the evidence of eroded channels and linear gullies found on the slopes of Martian sand dunes, seen in satellite imagery captured by the Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter. But a recent study led by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, with assistance by Hugenholtz and other researchers, offers a new explanation for the Martian gullies. The report indicates that the grooves were more likely formed by blocks of carbon dioxide, or dry ice. But how did an Alberta geographer wind up working on a NASA study on the surface of Mars? [UC Faculty of Arts Research](#)

U Saskatchewan's John Pomeroy helps Daily Planet look at science behind the Alberta floods during Dissecting Disaster week: The devastating Alberta floods will be one of the harrowing calamities Daily Planet will be investigating during a weeklong look at both natural and man-made disasters and how we respond to them. On September 2 the show will have a look at the science behind recovery efforts in High River, zeroing in on Canadian Dewatering's attempt to pump flood water out of the devastated town. John Pomeroy will be familiar to those who have followed coverage of the flooding in Alberta. The Canada research chair in Water Resources from the University of Saskatchewan, Pomeroy and his staff man a weather station in Kananaskis Country. He has been vocal in suggesting that Alberta needs to improve its flood forecasting system. The segment on studying the flood in the Rockies will air [Sept. 3. The Calgary Herald](#)

New Book

Guido Cervone, Jessica Lin and Nigel Waters. 2013. [Data Mining for Geoinformatics: Methods and Applications](#). Springer. ISBN-10: 1461476682. ISBN-13: 978-1461476689



The rate at which geospatial data is being generated exceeds our computational capabilities to extract patterns for the understanding of a dynamically changing world. Geoinformatics and data mining focuses on the development and implementation of computational algorithms to solve these problems. This unique volume contains a collection of chapters on state-of-the-art data mining techniques applied to geoinformatic problems of high complexity and important societal value. Data Mining for Geoinformatics addresses current concerns and developments relating to spatio-temporal data mining issues in remotely-sensed data, problems in meteorological data such as tornado formation, estimation of radiation from the Fukushima nuclear power plant, simulations of traffic data using OpenStreetMap, real time traffic applications of data stream mining, visual analytics of traffic and weather data and the exploratory visualization of collective, mobile objects such as the flocking behavior of wild chickens. This book is designed for researchers and advanced-level students focused on computer science, earth science and geography as a reference or secondary text book. Practitioners working in the areas of data mining and geoscience will also find this book to be a valuable reference.

New in [Cartographica](#)

Nigel Waters. [Selected Papers from the 26th International Cartographic Conference, Dresden, 25–30 August 2013: The Challenges of Visualization](#)

Bálint Kádár and Mátyás Gede. [Where Do Tourists Go? Visualizing and Analysing the Spatial Distribution of Geotagged Photography](#)

Mari Laakso, Tapani Sarjakoski, Lassi Lehto and L. Tiina Sarjakoski. [An Information Model for Pedestrian Routing and Navigation Databases Supporting Universal Accessibility](#)

Min Lu and Masatoshi Arikawa. [Location-Based Illustration Mapping Applications and Editing Tools](#)

Tomasz Opach and Jan Ketil Rød. [Cartographic Visualization of Vulnerability to Natural Hazards](#)

José Jesús Reyes Nuñez. [Smartphone-Based School Atlases?](#)

Guillaume Touya and Carmen Brando-Escobar. [Detecting Level-of-Detail Inconsistencies in Volunteered Geographic Information Data Sets](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

David E. Atkinson, K. Sassen, M. Hayashi, C.F. Cahill, G. Shaw, D. Harrigan and H. Fuelberg. 2013. [Aerosol properties over Interior Alaska from lidar, DRUM Impactor sampler, and OPC-sonde measurements and their meteorological context during ARCTAS-A, April 2008](#). Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics 13:1293-1310.

Jonathan L. Bamber, Martin J. Siegert, Jennifer A. Griggs, Shawn J. Marshall and Giorgio Spada. 2013. [Paleofluvial mega-canyon beneath the central Greenland ice sheet](#). Science 341:997-999.

Sébastien Breau. 2013. [The Occupy movement and the top 1% in Canada](#). Antipode. DOI:10.1111/anti.12044

Sutama Ghosh. 2013. [A passage to Canada: The differential migrations of South Asian skilled workers to Toronto](#). Journal of International Migration and Integration. DOI:10.1007/s12134-013-0298-0

Sandra Proulx-McInnis, André St-Hilaire, Alain N. Rousseau and Sylvain Jutras. 2013. [A review of ground-penetrating radar studies related to peatland stratigraphy with a case study on the determination of peat thickness in a northern boreal fen in Quebec, Canada](#). The Holocene. doi:10.1177/0309133313501106

Robert A. McLeman, Juliette Dupre, Lea Berrang Ford, James Ford, Konrad Gajewski and Gregory Marchildon. 2013. [What we learned from the Dust Bowl: lessons in science, policy, and adaptation](#). Population and Environment. DOI:10.1007/s11111-013-0190-z

F. Chantel Nixon, John H. England, Patrick Lajeunesse, Michelle A. Hanson. 2013. [Deciphering patterns of postglacial sea level at the junction of the Laurentide and Innuitian Ice Sheets, western Canadian High Arctic](#). Quaternary Science Reviews. doi.org/10.1016/j.quascirev.2013.07.005

Yolande Pottie-Sherman and Rima Wilkes. 2013. [Good code bad code: Exploring the immigration-nation dialectic through media coverage of the Hérouxville 'Code of Life' document](#). Migration Studies. doi:10.1093/migration/mnt002

Stephen A. Wolfe, Christopher W. Stevens, Adrian J. Gaanderse and Greg A. Oldenborger. 2013. [Lithalsa distribution, morphology and landscape associations in the Great Slave Lowland, Northwest Territories, Canada](#). Geomorphology. doi.org/10.1016/j.geomorph.2013.08.014

Recent Theses and Dissertations

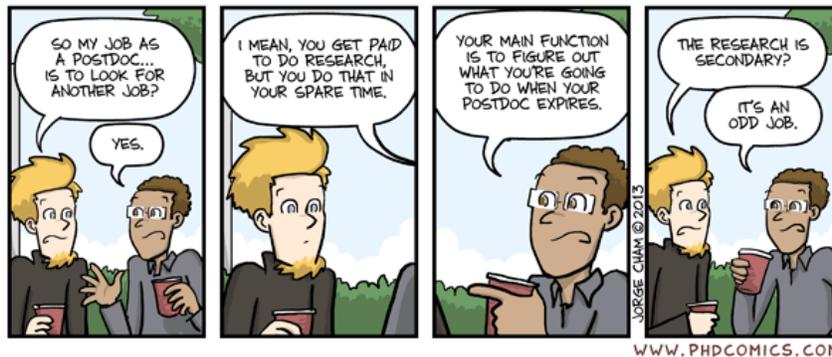
Jessica Blythe. 2013. [Dynamics of fishers' responses to social-ecological change in coastal Mozambique: a resilience perspective](#). Ph.D. dissertation. Department of Geography, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia. Supervisors: Mark Flaherty and Grant Murray.

Nicholas Alexander Sherrington. 2013. [Ulva lactuca L. as an inorganic extractive component for Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture in British Columbia: An analysis of potentialities and pitfalls](#). M.Sc. thesis. Department of Geography, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia. Supervisor: Stephen F. Cross.

Other “Geographical” News

It’s time students faced the financial facts of education: For students heading to campus for the first time, it seems a moment of endless possibilities. And yet according to a recent study, a student’s future prospects may be largely decided the moment they pick their major. However, recent research suggests the financial advantage accruing to university grads has been shrinking of late. The cost of an undergraduate degree has risen 20 per cent in the past five years alone. And the five percentage point unemployment rate differential that university graduates once enjoyed over high school grads has shrunk to a mere 1.7. [Macleans.ca](http://www.macleans.ca)

Some not so “Geographical” News



The CAG now works for geographers on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/CanGeographers). Keep up-to-date by following [CanGeographers](https://twitter.com/CanGeographers)
GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>
