



# GeogNews

Glacier National Park, British Columbia

News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers

No. 316, August 5, 2014

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**UNBC's Phil Owens heads to Mt. Polley disaster site:** A UNBC Environmental Sciences professor is on his way to the site of Monday's breach of the Mount Polley mine. Phil Owens says he is joining a team of researchers to examine the damage the mine's breach had on the local water-ways. "We've been taking samples already, since we heard about this," he says. "We're looking at the impact and are looking at the impact and how we might be able to help the local communities and mine staff to alleviate the problem and understand the long-term impacts." He says a catastrophic like this is very rare and no one knows yet what the full impacts are. A UNBC environmental sciences professor is on his way to the site of Monday's breach of the Mount Polley mine. Phil Owens says he is joining a team of researchers to examine the damage the mine's breach had on the local water-ways. "We've been taking samples already, since we heard about this," he says. "We're looking at the impact and are looking at the impact and how we might be able to help the local communities and mine staff to alleviate the problem and understand the long-term impacts." He says a catastrophic event like this is very rare and no one knows yet what the full impacts are. Owens says Hazeltine Creek suffered the most damage, while waste water also made it to the mouth of both the Polley and Quesnel Lakes and is likely to be toxic, but until they speak with the mine's owner – Imperial Metals, they won't know for sure. [HQPrinceGeorge.com](http://HQPrinceGeorge.com)

**Trent U geography students and research - July 2014:** Kristyn Foster, 4th year Geography major, is spending her summer at the Daring Lake Tundra Ecology Research Station under the supervision of Dr. Peter Lafleur 300 km north of Yellowknife, NWT. Kristyn will be assisting a Trent PhD student with studies on carbon balance of tundra ecosystems and she will be conducting her own research project into the vegetation and soil controls on active layer depth in the low Arctic, which will form the basis of an honours thesis.

**U Victoria's Simon Springer on appointment of human rights campaigner to Cambodia's National Election Committee:** A well-known human rights campaigner has been appointed to Cambodia's National Election Committee (NEC) – and the impacts could be huge. While in most contexts, a person being selected for an election committee would be a barely newsworthy piece of bureaucracy, the selection of Kek is hugely significant. Simon Springer, an assistant professor in the Department of Geography and Cambodia expert at the University of Victoria, says that this is “the best thing that has happened to Cambodian politics since the fall of the Khmer Rouge.” This is because, says Springer, the development means Cambodia will have an unbiased NEC for the first time ever. Springer outlined why the selection of Kek will make sure that the NEC is neutral. “Kek is such a strong and intelligent woman who quite simply does not pull punches. She takes the CPP to task on all of their human rights abuses, and is never afraid to speak her mind, but at the same time she also doesn't give the CNRP a free pass on some of the racist and anti-Vietnamese sentiments that have found their way into opposition politics,” he said. The changes that Kek's selection will bring are, of course, unknown as of yet, and only time will tell. But Springer predicts that it will mean the next election will see a change in government, as the CPP will lose their ability to manipulate election results so significantly. [AsianCorrespondent.com](http://AsianCorrespondent.com)

**York U's William Jenkins' book Between Raid and Rebellion has picked up three awards this year:** York history and geography Professor William Jenkins' book [Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto, 1867-1916](#) (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013) came earlier this year. The Canadian Historical Association awarded Jenkins the annual Clio Prize for Ontario, which recognizes significant regional history publications. It was quickly followed by the James S. Donnelly, Sr. Prize for books on history and social sciences, sponsored by the American Conference for Irish Studies. The hat trick was the Ontario Historical Society's (OHS's) Joseph Brant Award which recognizes the best book on multicultural history in the province published in the past three years. Ian Radforth, chair of the Honours and Awards Committee of the OHS, calls the book a “ground-breaking study.” Jenkins says winning the awards was satisfying and encouraging. “It was a great shot in the arm to receive at the end of a research and writing process that took several years. I've felt both thrilled and humbled to have received awards from both the history and Irish studies communities on both sides of the border.” He added that “If people appreciate the way you have put a story together and learn something new from it, there's not much more you can ask for.” [York U News](#)

**UBC PhD student Jake Wall designs system that can monitor elephant poaching in Africa:** Ivory tusks are a lucrative business — a single tusk can be worth 18 months' salary for a local ranger — and elephants are being killed for them. Jake Wall, a PhD student in the University of British Columbia's geography department, is hoping his work can help combat, or even one day completely stop, elephant poaching. While working for Save the Elephants, Wall designed several software algorithms that can analyze the elephants' movement and detect whether they've been killed or injured. Each algorithm processes specific data collected from elephants fitted with GPS satellite tracking collars. “We can really start painting a picture of the elephant and what it's experiencing,” says Wall. The animal's movements are monitored through Google Earth. The software then takes the monitoring data, analyses it and reveals

visual patterns. When it detects abnormal patterns, it sets off an alarm and local conservationists are deployed to the scene. The software can detect if an elephant stops moving or slows down. Wall says this could signal if the elephant has been killed. It can also detect if an elephant reaches an area where there is high risk of poaching. [CG Compass blog](#)

**U Victoria's Dave Duffus on Vancouver's park board decision not to end cetacean captivity:** Vancouver's park board voted not to order the aquarium to end its captivity of belugas, Pacific white-sided dolphins, and harbour porpoises. The aquarium has said its beluga whales and dolphins educate the public. It has said the cetaceans receive "exceptional care" and the facility is the only one in the country that can provide a long-term home for marine mammals deemed non-releasable by government authorities. It has also said its financial viability would be threatened without cetaceans. Dave Duffus, an associate professor of geography at the University of Victoria and director of its Whale Research Lab, said he would like the captivity of the cetaceans to end and had hoped the board would move firmly in that direction. "I think the aquarium won," he said in an interview. Duffus described the breeding ban as a notable first step, and said the only reason to breed captive cetaceans is for show. [The Globe and Mail](#)

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## Recent Theses and Dissertations

Janette Brual. 2014. Migration, place and the 'social determinants of health': Challenging the health status and utilization of health services by later-life Filipino immigrants. PhD Dissertation. Department of Geography, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. Supervisor: Dr. Mark W. Rosenberg

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**UCLA's Glen MacDonald** in the Department of Geography has been selected as the first holder of John Muir Memorial Endowed Chair in Geography.

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## Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Melanie Bedore. 2014. [Food desertification: Situating choice and class relations within an urban political economy of food access](#). Studies in Social Justice 8:207-228.

Elijah Bisung, Susan J. Elliott, Corinne J. Schuster-Wallace and Diana M. Karanja. 2014. [Social capital, collective action and access to water in Rural Kenya](#). Social Science & Medicine. DOI:10.1016/j.socscimed.2014.07.060

Tara Cater and Arn Keeling. 2013. [That's Where Our Future Came From': Mining, landscape, and memory in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut](#). Etudes/Inuit/Studies 37:59-82

A.A. Vahedi, A. Mataji, S. Babayi-Kafaki, J. Eshaghi-Rad, S.M. Hodjati and A. Djomo. 2014. [Formulating allometric equations for predicting bole biomass of beech-hornbeam stands in the Hyrcanian forests of Iran](#). Journal of Forest Science 60:236–247.

Suzana Dragičević, Terence Lai and Shivanand Balram. 2014. [GIS-based multicriteria evaluation with multiscale analysis to characterize urban landslide susceptibility in data-scarce environments](#). Habitat International. DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2014.06.031

Calvin Lakhan. 2014. [Exploring the relationship between municipal promotion and education investments and recycling rate performance in Ontario, Canada](#). Resources, Conservation and Recycling. DOI: 10.1016/j.resconrec.2014.07.006

Andrew C.-D. Lee and Claus Rinner. 2014. [Visualizing urban social change with Self-Organizing Maps: Toronto neighbourhoods, 1996–2006](#). Habitat International. DOI: 10.1016/j.habitatint.2014.06.027

Dylan Simone and K. Bruce Newbold. 2014. [Housing trajectories across the urban hierarchy: Analysis of the longitudinal survey of immigrants to Canada, 2001–2005](#). Housing Studies. DOI:10.1080/02673037.2014.933782

Lianne Soller, Sabine Cherkaoui, Moshe Ben-Shoshan, Daniel W. Harrington, Megan Knoll, Joseph Fragapane, Lawrence Joseph, Yvan St. Pierre, Sebastien La Vieille, Kathi Wilson, Susan J. Elliott and Ann E. Clarke. 2014. [Likelihood of being prescribed an epinephrine autoinjector in allergic Canadians with lower educational levels](#). Annals of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology. DOI:10.1016/j.anai.2014.06.028

Kenneth Whitehead and Chris Hugenholtz. 2014. [Remote sensing of the environment with small Unmanned Aircraft Systems \(UASs\), Part 1: A review of progress and challenges](#). Journal of Unmanned Vehicle Systems. DOI:10.1139/juvs-2014-0006

Kenneth Whitehead, Chris Hugenholtz, Stephen Myshak, Owen Brown, Adam LeClair, Aaron Tamminga, Thomas Barchyn, Brian Moorman and Brett Eaton. 2014. [Remote sensing of the environment with small Unmanned Aircraft Systems \(UASs\), Part 2: Scientific and commercial applications](#). Journal of Unmanned Vehicle Systems. DOI: 10.1139/juvs-2014-0007

Amy Zarzeczny, Timothy Caulfield, Ubaka Ogbogu, Peter Bell, Valorie A. Crooks, Kalina Kamenova, Zubin Master, Christen Rachul, Jeremy Snyder, Maeghan Toews and Sonja Zoeller. 2014. [Professional regulation: a potentially valuable tool in responding to “Stem Cell Tourism”](#). Stem Cell Reports. DOI: 10.1016/j.stemcr.2014.06.016

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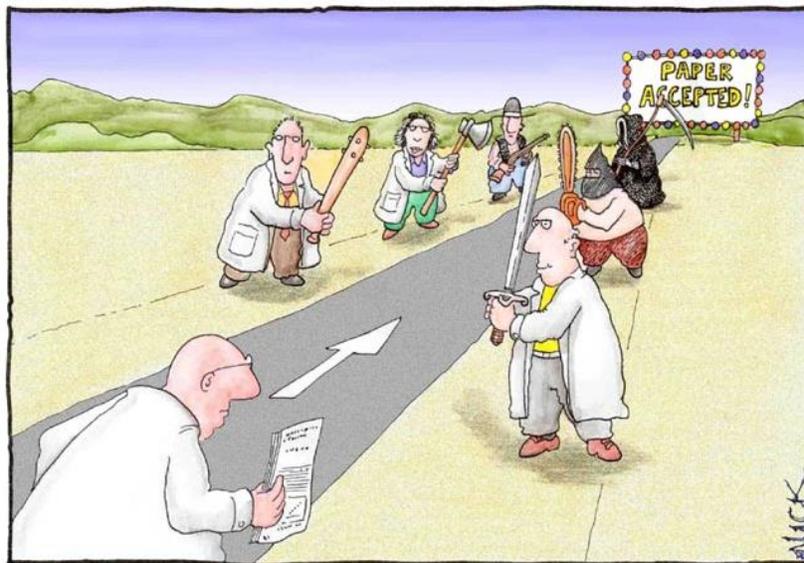
## Other “Geographical” News

**The impact factor as a useful metric is becoming less useful:** With the release of the 2013 impact factors recently, I was reminded about a fascinating piece over at the London School of Economics and Political Science Impact Blog from a few years ago. The article argues that the relationship between impact factor and the citations by journal has been declining since 2012. The authors argue that this declining relationship is due to the availability of journals articles online, making traditional journal boundaries less important. Hence, good papers don't just have to be published in journals with high impact factors; they can be published anywhere. [Eloquent Science](#)

**Stop the deluge of science research:** The rapid growth of scientific literature is often seen as evidence, if evidence were needed, that the pace of human discovery is accelerating. On the contrary, however, it is becoming a curse – one that requires us to radically rethink what it means to publish the results of research. Estimates vary wildly, but probably between a quarter and a third of all research papers in the natural sciences go uncited. A much larger proportion is cited only by their own authors or by one or two others. This is not necessarily a sign of inadequate or wasteful research, but it should give us pause. It is at least partly a result of the imperative for researchers to publish in order to continue to secure funding and employment, and the accompanying incentive to salami-slice research results so as to secure the maximum number of publications from any given piece of work. This in turn leads to the bane of every scientist's existence: far too many papers to read in far too little time. [The Guardian](#)

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### Some not so “Geographical” News



Most scientists regarded the new streamlined peer-review process as "quite an improvement."

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