



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers**  
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**U Waterloo's Maria Strack dishes the dirt on Western Canada's other black gold:** Maria Strack is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography and Environmental Management at the University of Waterloo and the NSERC Canada Research Chair in Ecosystem and Climate writes "We don't often think about the value of dirt, particularly if it's in a cold and soggy bog. In fact, Canada's northern wetland soils are worth a lot. As we celebrate World Wetlands Day, it might be time to take a new look at these ecosystems. Wetland ecosystems cover 14 per cent of Canada's land area. Most of these wetlands are peatlands, a thick soil, rich in organic matter also called bogs, fens and muskeg, located in northern regions. This organic matter is a giant store of carbon, and that carbon is valuable." "While we often discuss the value of natural resources in Canada's north, we don't usually consider wetland soils as one of these. But methods are in place that value soil carbon. For example, farmers can be paid for reducing tillage, a practice that helps to keep more carbon in agricultural soils. International pressure to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has started to set the dollar value for carbon in Canada. For example, in Alberta one option for large industrial emitters that exceed their greenhouse gas intensity is to pay into the Climate Change Emissions Management Fund at a rate of \$15 per tonne of carbon dioxide. Placing this value on our wetland soil carbon stocks suggests they could be worth at least \$8.7 trillion. Using British Columbia's \$30 per tonne carbon tax rate would double this value." [U Waterloo Environment](#)

**U Victoria's Chris Darimont leading Raincoast's Applied Conservation Science Lab:** Raincoast Conservation Foundation's Applied Conservation Science Lab at the University of Victoria approaches academia in a distinctive manner. Supported by the Tula Foundation and Raincoast, and led by Raincoast's long time Science Director and Hakai-Raincoast Professor of Geography Dr. Chris Darimont, is making history as a truly unique conservation science lab. Darimont's mentor, internationally renowned large carnivore expert, and Raincoast Senior Scientist, Dr. Paul Paquet, is an integral part of the Raincoast Lab. The Raincoast Lab does science that matters, contributing to tangible change in the real world. In the lab's first two years, a team of graduate students, post-docs, and principal investigators published 16 peer-reviewed articles on topics covering carnivore ecology and physiology, population biology, perspectives on indigenous and western science, and the ethics of trophy hunting. All derive from research that is entrenched in the natural environment, exploration, and community discourse. The lab's work and influence extends beyond field studies and research to also explore the complementary role that ethics and science can play in guiding the management and conservation of wildlife. For example, analyses concerning the BC government's management of grizzly bears revealed troubling shortcomings in both ethics and science. These findings commanded the attention of elected officials, and bolstered the policy efforts of indigenous governments who have demanded an end to grizzly bear hunting in the Great Bear Rainforest. [Seaside Magazine](#)

**U Guelph PhD student Jennifer Vansteenkiste establishes Haiti Food Hub:** Jennifer Vansteenkiste has been studying development issues in Haiti since 2006. While working at a community centre there, she learned that food security was a priority for local women, along with starting their own businesses and sending their children to school. When she returned to Guelph, she started a PhD with geography professor Evan Fraser, focusing on food security and the political economy in Haiti. “What has really created food insecurity for people in Haiti was the demise of national agricultural production by poorly designed government policy and international policy,” says Vansteenkiste. She points to Haiti’s debt crisis in the ’70s and ’80s, which forced the country to open its market to imported food as part of a debt renegotiation strategy. Vansteenkiste established the [Haiti Food Hub](#), which aims to strengthen the Haitian economy by increasing local food production. As a pilot project, the food hub will produce soap using local ingredients, such as coconut oil, palm oil, vegetable oil and goat’s milk, all of which are readily available in Haiti. “Often the imported soap is of poor quality, so the goat’s milk soap is a safer alternative for Haitians,” she says. “It’s also culturally appropriate because Haitians used to make their own soap before their efforts were displaced by cheaper products.” The soap project is a collaborative effort between the Department of Geography and the Department of Management, which developed a business plan, production and marketing strategy, and the Department of Food Science, which helped with import guidelines, labeling and testing of the recipe. The project also aims to connect researchers with entrepreneurs in Haiti. [At Guelph](#)

**Western U Geography Department to celebrate grand opening of Heal:** On Monday, February 9, the grand opening of the [Human Environments Analysis Laboratory](#) will take place. Funded by a bequest from the estate of Al and Donna Angelov, the renovation of the new HEAL is a major cause for celebration in Western Geography. The HEAL is a state-of-the-art, inter-disciplinary research and training environment which specializes in the production, evaluation, synthesis, dissemination and mobilization of evidence to support effective policies, programs and professional practice aimed at creating healthy and vibrant communities. The HEAL examines social and physical environments from the scale of entire regions down to the level of individual buildings or open spaces and their inhabitants. They specialize in community-based participatory research and applications of GIS for urban planning and public health. [Western Geography News](#)

**U Victoria’s Reuben Rose-Redwood on making Victoria’s Government Street a people place:** Victoria council won’t find a magic formula for success to help turn a stretch of Government Street into a pedestrian mall. But Reuben Rose-Redwood, associate professor of geography at the University of Victoria, said the five-block area of Government Street is a good spot to block traffic. It’s already distinct, as a one-way street, and he believes the potential damage to businesses has been overstated. Some concerns could be addressed by allowing special road access for things like deliveries, he said. Walkability is identified as a priority in Victoria’s official community plan, and creating pedestrian malls may reduce the city’s carbon footprint, he said. “I personally think it would be a great idea. There are often concerns from the business community about the reduction in car traffic reducing sales and things. But from the studies I’ve looked at, I haven’t really seen much evidence to back that up,” Rose-Redwood said. [Victoria Times Colonist](#)

**Queen’s U geography students participate in exchange with students from Syracuse U:** Queen’s University students from the Department of Geography and the School of Urban and Regional Planning participated in an exchange with students from Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Public Affairs during the weekend of October 24th 2014. Queen’s University’s Betsy Donald kicked off the exchange at the Departmental Colloquium with her talk on austerity in the city. A lively discussion ensued with insightful comments from both Canadian and American perspectives. Participants ventured into the crisp morning early Saturday on a field trip entitled “Infrastructure Sharing in the Fragmented Metropolis.” [Queen’s Geography News](#)

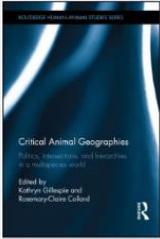
**U Alberta establishes Carl Amrhein Aboriginal Student Fund to celebrate Amrhein's contributions as provost and vice-president:** The [Carl Amrhein Aboriginal Student Fund](#) will promote greater student participation in programs that offer Aboriginal teaching and learning experiences by making more funding available through scholarships, bursaries and awards for students to attend these programs. During his three terms as provost and vice-president (academic) at the U of A, geographer Dr. Carl Amrhein was a passionate advocate, consultant, counsellor and friend to the Aboriginal community. Dr. Amrhein put in place and advanced programs that recognized and celebrated the unique identities of Aboriginal peoples. Now, the Carl Amrhein Aboriginal Student Fund will continue his efforts to ensure that Aboriginal students receive the same opportunities as all students. Dr. Amrhein holds a bachelor of science in geography from Pennsylvania State University (1978) and a PhD in geography from State University of New York at Buffalo (1984) with research interest in economic geography, labour markets, decision theory, migration, and quantitative methods. [U Alberta News](#)

**Ryerson U's Raktim Mitra on why letting kids explore and play keeps them healthy:** Children permitted to play outdoors on their own or with friends are getting more physical activity than kids who are constantly supervised, a new Canadian study suggests. Study lead author Raktim Mitra of Toronto's Ryerson University said researchers wanted to explore the impact on kids' physical health if they were given freedom to explore places within their neighbourhoods without adult supervision. Researchers analyzed data from a survey of more than 1,000 parents and caregivers of Grades 5 and 6 students at 16 public elementary schools across Toronto, including those located in both low-income and affluent areas, as well as in urban and suburban neighbourhoods. Kids had to wear an activity measurement unit known as an accelerometer for seven days. About 35 per cent of parents or caregivers reported that they never allow kids to go out on their own or with friends. Only 16 per cent said they either frequently or always permitted kids to travel on their own independently. Mitra co-authored the study with Guy Faulkner and Ron Buliung from the University of Toronto and Michelle Stone of Dalhousie University in Halifax. The paper was funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and published in the December issue of the journal *Urban Studies*. [CBC News | Toronto](#)

**Carleton U's Fraser Taylor reminisces on a groundbreaking conference held simultaneously at CU and the University of Edinburgh:** In December of 1984, an International Seminar on Technology Innovation and Social Change was held between a budding 40-year-old Carleton University and the fully bloomed University of Edinburgh, which had at the time just celebrated its 400th anniversary. The Seminar was organized by celebrated member of the CU community, Distinguished Research Professor and Director of the Geomatics and Cartographic Research Centre, Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada and 2014 Killam Award winner, Fraser Taylor. As a graduate of the University of Edinburgh, Taylor was excited with the prospect of working with his alma mater; and knowing that both universities had Canadian Studies programs, he saw this as a terrific opportunity to forge an alliance between the two institutions. Taylor spearheaded the initiative, and uninspiringly, an agreement was quickly reached. Accordingly, Taylor acted as Chair of the organizing committee, which also involved many people at Carleton as well as funders from Government and Industry. Titled "Technology Innovation and Social Change," the 1984 seminar was in many ways, quite ahead of its time. Much like today, in the 80's there existed a longing to acquire a better understanding of the effect of technology on social change in a media-scape that was changing quickly. "We were using new technology to discuss the impact of such technologies," reminisced Taylor. "We pioneered what is now a common form of international communication, and to my knowledge this was the first time this had ever been done between two universities on different continents!" Considering today's omnipresence of 'borderless' intercontinental institutional collaboration, the trailblazing spirit of this partnership cannot be overlooked. [Carleton DGES News](#)

## New Book

Kathryn Gillespie & Rosemary-Claire Collard, eds. 2015. [Critical Animal Geographies: Politics, Intersections and Hierarchies in a Multispecies World](#). New York: Routledge.



Just released, *Critical Animal Geographies* brings together top animal geographers and their original research on topics ranging from foie gras production to coyotes in the city. The book kicks off Routledge's new Human-Animal series, edited by Henry Buller. As a whole, *Critical Animal Geographies* works toward a more radical politics and theory directed at the shifting boundary between human and animal. The authors' perspectives are diverse: feminist, political-economic, post-humanist, anarchist, post-colonial, and critical race. Central to all the chapters is a commitment to grappling with the stakes – violence, death, life, autonomy – of human-animal encounters.



### **Dalhousie U's Robert Summerby-Murray Named Saint Mary's University's President-Elect:**

Originally from New Zealand, Summerby-Murray came to Canada in 1986 to complete his PhD at the University of Toronto. His academic career includes 18 years at Mount Allison University, where he served for seven years as Dean of Social Sciences. [Saint Mary's U News](#)

**Western U's Dimuth Kurukula** (MSc Candidate Geography) advances to Regional Finals of the 6th Annual Hult Prize Competition. Sponsored by the Hult Prize Foundation, the Hult Prize Challenge is the world's largest student competition and start-up platform for social good. [Western News](#)

**U Victoria recognizes Susan Cartwright**, BA '79 (Geography) as *2015 Distinguished Alumni*. Susan enjoyed a distinguished career in Ottawa and abroad, starting with Canada's foreign service and becoming an ambassador before the age of 40. Her responsibilities included senior roles with Fisheries and Oceans, the Treasury Board secretariat and Health Canada. [UVic Social Sciences](#)

**U British Columbia's Jamie Peck** has been nominated to be a part of the Scientific Advisory Committee for the World Social Science Report, coordinated by the International Social Science Council-UNESCO. [UBC Geography](#)

**Memorial U Geography Undergrad, Caitlyn Baikie**, one of 5 under 30 Young Indigenous Leaders to Watch. The [CBC](#) has identified a small group of young indigenous leaders: 5 under 30 to watch in 2015. Caitlyn Baikie is in her final year of study as a geography undergraduate student. [Memorial Geography](#)

**Former U Toronto graduate student Raktim Mitra** interviewed on CBC news about work he did while at the University of Toronto with Professor Ron Buliung.

**U Victoria Geography Undergrad co-op student Kiera Smith** part of team focus is on sediment cores collected from the Greater Victoria Water Supply Area to serve as a first-order reference to what future conditions may be like if induced by climate change. [Saanich News](#)

**Simon Fraser U Medical Tourism Research Group** facilitating first public screening of Tales from the Organ Trade in BC on March 10 in Vancouver. [SGU Geography News](#)

**U Northern British Columbia** hosting Annual Meeting of the Western Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers, March 13-14, 2015. [Conference Website](#)

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### Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

F. Gauthier, M. Allard and B. Héту. 2015. [Ice wall growth and decay: Meteorological analysis and modelling](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1835

Ryan Hackett. 2015. [Market-based environmental governance and public resources in Alberta, Canada](#). Ecosystem Services. DOI:10.1016/j.ecoser.2015.01.003.

Adrian S. Hickin, Olav B. Lian, Victor M. Levson and Yao Cui. 2015. [Pattern and chronology of glacial Lake Peace shorelines and implications for isostasy and ice-sheet configuration in northeastern British Columbia, Canada](#). Boreas. DOI: 10.1111/bor.12110

Gang Hong, Shusen Wang, Junhua Li and Jingfeng Huang. 2015. [Fully polarimetric Synthetic Aperture Radar \(SAR\) processing for crop type identification](#). Journal Article Photogrammetric Engineering & Remote Sensing 81. DOI: 10.14358/PERS.81.2.109

Denis Lacelle, Alex Brooker, Robert H. Fraser and Steve V. Kokelj. 2015. [Distribution and growth of thaw slumps in the Richardson Mountains – Peel Plateau region, northwestern Canada](#). Geomorphology. DOI: 10.1016/j.geomorph.2015.01.024

Jacek Malczewski and Claus Rinner. 2015. [Heuristic methods](#). In: Multicriteria Decision Analysis in Geographic Information Science. Advances in Geographic Information Science. 145-189.

Bryan J. Mood and Dan J. Smith. 2015. [Latest Pleistocene and Holocene behaviour of Franklin Glacier, Mt. Waddington area, British Columbia Coast Mountains, Canada](#). The Holocene. DOI:10.1177/0959683615569321

Barry Wellar. 2015. [Review and implications of the AutoCarto Six Retrospective Project](#). International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research (IJAGR) 6. DOI: 10.4018/ijagr.2015070105

Dion J. Wiseman and Jurjen van der Sluijs. 2015. [Alternative methods for developing and assessing the accuracy of UAV-derived DEMs](#). International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research (IJAGR) 6. DOI: 10.4018/ijagr.2015070104

Dandan Xu and Xulin Guo. 2015. [Some insights on grassland health assessment based on remote sensing](#). Sensors 15:3070-3089.

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## Other “Geographical” News

### **Oath market. Quality control in science journals is evolving, with a code of ethics in hot pursuit:**

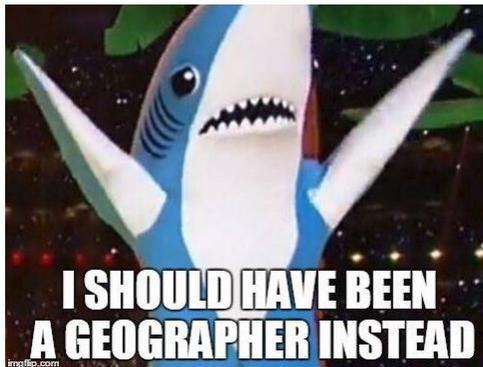
The process by which academics check the work of their colleagues before it goes to print—peer review, in the argot—is nearly as old as scientific publishing itself. But like every human endeavour, it is fraught with human frailties and the process can be hijacked in a variety of ways. As a result, and as with so many facets of publishing, peer review is the subject of much experimentation, and one upstart publisher is trying to codify some good behaviour. [The Economist](#)

**Scandals prompt return to peer review and reproducible experiments:** Diederik Stapel a rock-star scientist admitted in 2011 that he’d been fabricating data for many years. The case was an outlier, an extreme example of scientific fraud. But this and several other high-profile cases of misconduct resonated in the scientific community because of a much broader, more pernicious problem: too often, experimental results can’t be reproduced. And so there’s a movement afoot, and building momentum rapidly. Roughly four centuries after the invention of the scientific method, the leaders of the scientific community are recalibrating their requirements, pushing for the sharing of data and greater experimental transparency. [The Guardian](#)

**The importance of mentoring undergraduate students:** For any undergraduate contemplating a career in scientific research, participating in authentic research seems like a good opportunity. But what are authentic research experiences? How do they benefit undergraduates? What forms of mentoring are successful? What needs improvement? And how can these experiences meet the needs of interested students while at the same time be cost-effective in large research universities? We review the research tackling these questions and find few answers. [Science](#)

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## Some not so “Geographical” News



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

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