



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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Vancouver Island U's Don Alexander reflects on Main and Hastings in Vancouver, where a radical rebuff to the rich is taking shape: At the corner of Main and Hastings in Vancouver's poorest yet fast changing neighbourhood stands the city's former police headquarters, empty since 2010. What should be the next life for the building has been the subject of brainstorming, debate and protest in recent years. The outcome now taking shape -- what is officially called 312 Main: Vancouver's Social and Economic Innovation Centre -- represents something of a compromise between the desires of city hall, which wanted purely a tech incubator, and the social justice driven vision of Bob Williams and his allies at VanCity credit union. As a social geographer, I'm particularly interested in people who go against prevailing trends and are able to shift in significant ways the social climate and even the physical geography of a city. Vancouver examples include those who fought against "urban renewal" in Strathcona which, had it proceeded, would have seen the demolition of the entire neighbourhood. Or anti-freeway activists who forced a halt to a plan to run a freeway through Grandview-Woodlands, Strathcona, and Gastown, making Vancouver the only major city in North America without a downtown freeway, and leading to a major shift in political culture at city hall. The project is expected to be financially self-sufficient beyond the initial start-up grants, with the larger leaseholds helping to subsidize the less-than-break-even spaces. Although not unprecedented, the centre represents a new form of public access space, especially in a city where large-scale building or renovation projects have become almost exclusively a game for rich investors, making us increasingly, as Bob puts it, "tenants in our own backyard." Moreover, it will be a building in which the residents of the Downtown Eastside will feel completely at home. In a microcosmic way, the building addresses what is seen as a central issue for the region and the province -- the fact that the economic hegemony of the One Per Cent is based on control over land. This project, in a small way, takes back control of urban real estate for residents -- not only providing access to the community, but sharing benefits such as \$300,000 in annual investment in the neighbourhood, \$1 million in local procurement and employment, and greater opportunities for community entrepreneurship and self-reliance. The project is expected to be financially self-sufficient beyond the initial start-up grants, with the larger leaseholds helping to subsidize the less-than-break-even spaces. [The Tyee](#)

Mount Allison U's Ben Phillip uses attic beams to date historic Sackville homes: Conservation biologist Ben Phillips has been spending a lot of time lately in dusty attics and dank basements in the Sackville area. "I just climbed out of the attic of the Bell Inn — it is one of the many buildings in the Tantramar region that we're trying to date". Phillips is working with the Tantramar Heritage Trust to determine the age of some of the oldest homes in the Maritimes, including the Bell Inn in Dorchester, by taking core samples or "tree cookies" from wooden beams. "We can actually use the wood that's left in those old beams and we can look at the tree rings inside of that wood and measure each ring and look at the pattern," Phillips said. "We can match that to known tree-ring chronologies and actually find a kill date for the wood." Buildings may date back to 1700s Phillips, an instructor in the department of geography and environment at Mount Allison University where he manages the Acadian forest dendrochronology lab, says tree rings can reveal when the trees were cut, right down to the year and the season. "In a lot of these cases that we're working on now, these buildings are from the early 1800s and possibly the late 1700s. There wasn't good records kept for a lot of these buildings so finding accurate dates helps to match with the architecture," Phillips said. [CBCNews | New Brunswick](#)

U Alberta's Sandeep Agrawal urges review of use of restrictive covenants in Alberta: Albertans make greater use of a powerful legal device to limit the future use of private land than other provinces do, and may be harming their own communities the process, says the head of the University of Alberta's planning program. Sandeep Agrawal says restrictive covenants registered against a property's land title, are most often used by developers to enforce architectural and design guidelines in neighbourhoods, but have also been used by companies to restrict competition and are now being used as a weapon by residents to fight City Hall. Restrictive covenants were used by Canada Safeway to ensure no competitor opened on their former properties once they sold their stores, creating what Agrawal called "food deserts". Canada Safeway no longer exists as a corporate entity, but the restrictions on grocery stores are still in place, despite years of study and protest by the City of Edmonton. Now, residents who are fighting the city's plan to increase densities in older neighbourhoods say they will register covenants on their properties preventing them from being subdivided any time in the future. It's a prospect Agrawal says could clash with city goals such as transit-oriented development and its plans for more sustainable, walkable communities. Agrawal said filing a restrictive covenant is a "harsh and extreme" step because once they're registered on a land title, there is no "sunset clause" and removing them has been very difficult historically. "It is certainly a realistic concern ... and is in direct conflict with the city's vision and the city's policies and I think we're at the point where we need to deal with these types of restriction," Agrawal said. [CBCNews | Edmonton](#)

Recent Thesis and Dissertations

Creighton Connolly. 2016. A landscape political ecology of 'swiftlet farming' in Malaysian cities. PhD Dissertation, Department of Geography, School of Environment, Education & Development, University of Manchester, UK. Supervisors: Erik Swyngedouw and Maria Kaika

Eva Crego Liz. 2016. [Water grabbing and conflict in the Nile River basin: A focus on Ethiopia](#). MSc thesis. Department of Geography, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. Supervisor: Marwan Hassan.

Blánaid Donnelly. 2016. Livestock livelihoods and Indigenous health vulnerability in Kanungu District, Uganda. PhD Dissertation. Department of Geography. McGill University, Montreal, Quebec. Supervisor: Lea BerrangFord.



Simon Fraser U Geography welcomes Andrew Perkins who is joining the department on July 1st, 2016 as a Physical Geography lecturer. [SFU Geography](#)

Simon Fraser U Geography congratulated Andres Perkins for receiving this year's Dean's Convocation Medal for his PhD in Geography. The Dean of Graduate Studies' Convocation Medals recognize graduating students from each faculty whose cumulative grade-point-average places them in the top five per cent of their class. Andrew defended his PhD thesis entitled "*Refining the pattern and style of deglaciation on the southern Fraser Plateau and environ*" in September 2015. [SFU Geography](#)

Simon Fraser U graduate Olympia Koziatek was ranked top candidate in a Master's program for the nationwide completion for the 2016 Esri Young Scholar Award. [ESRI Canada](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Melanie Clapham and John Kitchin. 2016. [Social play in wild brown bears of varying age-sex class](#). Acta Ethologica. DOI:10.1007/s10211-016-0237-0

R.C. de Loë, D. Murray, S. Michaels and R. Plummer. 2016. [Policy transfer among regional-level organizations: Insights from source water protection in Ontario](#). Environmental Management 58:31-47.

James Gray, Gautier Davesne, Daniel Fortier and Etienne Godin. 2016. [The thermal regime of mountain permafrost at the summit of Mont Jacques-Cartier in the Gaspé Peninsula, Québec, Canada: A 37 year record of fluctuations showing an overall warming trend](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1903

Julie A. Heinrichs, Darren J. Bender and Nathan H. Schumaker. 2016. [Habitat degradation and loss as key drivers of regional population extinction](#). Ecological Modelling 335:64–73.

Josh Lepawsky and Creighton Connolly. [A crack in the facade? Situating Singapore in global flows of electronic waste](#). Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography 37:158-75.

William C. Mahaney, Ronald G.V. Hancock, Peeter Somelar and Alison Milan. 2016. [Iron and aluminum soil/paleosol extractions as age/environment indicators: Some examples from a catchment in southern Ontario, Canada](#). Geomorphology. DOI:10.1016/j.geomorph.2016.05.030

Ashley C. A. Rudy, Scott F. Lamoureux, Paul Treitz, Karin Van Ewijk, Philip P. Bonnaventure and Paul Budkewitsch. 2016. [Terrain controls and landscape-scale susceptibility modelling of active-layer detachments, Sabine Peninsula, Melville Island, Nunavut](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1900

S.A. Spencer and H.J. van Meerveld. 2016. [Double-funneling in a mature coastal British Columbia forest: Spatial patterns of stemflow after infiltration](#). Hydrological Processes. DOI:10.1002/hyp.10936

Alan Walks, Mihaela Dinca-Panaitescu and Dylan Simone. 2016. [Income Inequality and Polarization in the City of Toronto and York Region. Part I: Examining levels and trends from spatial and non-spatial perspectives](#). Cities Centre. University of Toronto. Research Paper 238.

Rong Wang, Jing M. Chen, Goran Pavlic and Altaf Arain. 2016. [Improving winter leaf area index estimation in coniferous forests and its significance in estimating the land surface albedo](#). ISPRS Journal of Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing 119:32–48.

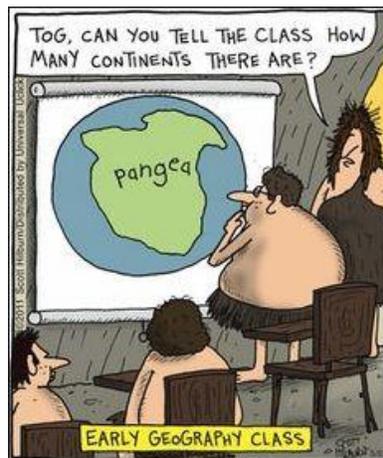
Emma Watson and Brian H. Luckman. 2016. [An investigation of the snowpack signal in moisture-sensitive trees from the Southern Canadian Cordillera](#). Dendrochronologia 38:118-130.

Steve A. Wolfe and P.D. Morse. 2016. [Lithalsa formation and Holocene lake-level recession, Great Slave lowland, Northwest Territories](#). Permafrost and Periglacial Processes. DOI:10.1002/ppp.1901

Other “Geographical” News

Supreme Court to decide this week on Yukon Peel watershed appeal: A major decision for Yukon is coming this week from the Supreme Court of Canada, according to lawyers on the Peel watershed land use case. The court is expected to announce Thursday whether or not it will hear an appeal by a group of Yukon First Nations and environmental groups. They want an earlier decision by the Yukon Court of Appeal on the Peel planning process overturned. That ruling quashed the Yukon Government's Peel land use plan, sending the process back to an earlier stage for more consultation. [CBCNews | North](#)

Some Not So “Geographical” News



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