



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 416, September 20, 2016**

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Canadian universities are becoming divestment dinosaurs: This summer, members of the Canadian Association of Geographers made a unanimous decision to divest their financial holdings from the world's biggest fossil fuel companies. In the process, CAG became the first academic organization in Canada to divest from fossil fuels. While joining hundreds of organizations, municipalities, churches and universities that have committed to shift their investments away from climate polluters, CAG also left behind every single Canadian university, which so far have ignored the calls from their students, faculty and staff to divest. CAG struck a committee to investigate investment strategies and costs of divesting. After weighing their options, the committee recommended full divestment, in no uncertain terms. The motion stated that the "principal benefit of full divestment is that the CAG makes a clear and strong statement that it is committed to reducing its support for, and dependence on, fossil fuel development, and that it backs this statement with carefully considered and effective actions...This would help confirm geographers as being leaders in climate change reduction efforts." They stated that the fossil-free fund established by Concordia University, and divestment from coal and tar sands by Stanford University are half-measures that "dilute the political aim of the divestment campaign." The CAG "did not find evidence that going fossil-free is likely to bring significant additional financial risk. To the contrary, a respected global investment index company found that fossil-free portfolios outperformed those with fossil fuel investments over the last five years." What the CAG is saying, unequivocally, is that divestment is doable, defensible and profitable, throwing shade directly at the University of Toronto, University of British Columbia and Dalhousie University for heel-dragging on divestment in the name of "fiduciary duty." Leadership on climate issues is boiling up from the bottom. University administrators need to stop holding us back and follow the leadership of their institutions' brightest. [The Coast](#)

Western Geography establishes a Weather Station: Western Geography has recently installed a wireless weather station close to the Social Science parking booth. The weather station has a variety of sensors for measuring air temperature, relative humidity, precipitation, barometric pressure, wind speed and direction, solar radiation, evapotranspiration and UV indices. The output from the station is available in both real time and as archived records for teaching and research. The data will be used to support student course and lab work in physical geography courses. This facility was made possible by a donation from Maurice and Judy Davidson and the Faculty of Social Science Student Donation Fund. To view the real time weather visit: <http://www.weatherlink.com/user/uwo/geo/geo> Click Summary at the top of the page for additional measurements. For access to the archived data, please contact the Department's Laboratory Supervisor, Erika Hill (ehill5@uwo.ca).

U Toronto's Meric Gertler and Isle Treurnicht believe that Toronto has the right recipe for innovation: Canada, happily, is well positioned to take advantage of the shift in the geography of innovation. It's one of the most urbanized nations in the world, with massively disproportionate GDP generated in and around Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. All three city regions are highly ranked globally for livability and affordability. And all have outsized research engines and thriving innovation ecosystems. The question now is whether our governments have the political will to capitalize on this momentum. The geography of innovation is changing. This shift has serious consequences for policy-making. And as cities become the leading engines of innovation, Canada will fall behind unless it embraces downtown density as a driving force in the new economy. That doesn't mean we should neglect our natural resource advantages; innovation is urgently needed in those sectors too. But if supporting high-impact young Canadian companies is a national goal, then governments should focus closely on the handful of urban nodes where companies in convergent fields, such as precision medicine, cleantech, advanced materials, financial technology and artificial intelligence are all blossoming. [Toronto Star](#)

U Victoria's Chris Darimont says island hopping grizzly bears sighted off the north end of Vancouver Island a 'red flag': Aboriginal people have stories about seeing the hulking bears — that number about 15,000 in B.C. — on Vancouver Island long ago, but grizzlies do not typically set up dens on Vancouver Island, where smaller black bears are prevalent. University of Victoria associate professor Chris Darimont believes this move to find new territory is a warning. "We should be paying attention to their arrival on islands. They have evolved the ability to swim for hundreds of thousands of years. That they have not colonized islands before in any huge way tells us that there is something up. They are now putting that swimming ability to use," said Darimont. Darimont, who is also science director at Raincoast Conservation, says it is a change in usual behaviour and perhaps a move to colonize new climes, at the same time B.C. is seeing declining salmon populations. [CBCNews | British Columbia](#)

U Calgary's Brian Moorman says climate change does 'weird things' to Canada's Arctic glaciers: University of Calgary geography professor Brian Moorman who studies glaciers in the Canadian territory of Nunavut says in the past few years he has seen things that has never seen before or that he would not have anticipated happening. "Like large lakes forming on top of glaciers because melting water is being produced so fast that it can't escape, or lakes that are dammed up by glaciers catastrophically draining out and completely drying out a river valley or a lake basin in a matter of a couple of days, losing millions of cubic metres of water," Moorman said. Moorman is undertaking his research both in the field, studying the glaciers on Bylot Island in Nunavut, as well as working with the Canadian Space Agency, using satellite radar imagery to measure ice loss of glaciers through a process known as dry calving, a natural process when the front of the glacier breaks off and crumbles to the ground at the base of the glacier. "Dry calving is important because with warming climates glaciers are melting, that meltwater flows into the ocean and ultimately results in sea level rise," Moorman said. Researchers have a pretty good handle on how much the glaciers are melting through normal melt processes, Moorman said. "But this dry calving does something different, it breaks the glacier into a bunch of small pieces that we think will melt much faster," Moorman said. [Radio Canada International](#)

Recently Completed Theses and Dissertations

Raymond Jahncke. 2016. [Mapping wetlands in Nova Scotia with multi-beam RADARSAT-2 SAR, optical satellite imagery, and elevation data](#). Master of Environmental Studies Thesis, School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University, Canada. Supervisors: Peter Bush and Peter Duinker.

[The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien](#)



Special Issue: Global Medical Geographies

Blake Byron Walker. 2016. [Making connections in a tough data scene](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:285–287.

Tom Koch. 2016. [Fighting disease, like fighting fires: The lessons Ebola teaches](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:288–299.

Colin Robertson, Lauren Yee, Julia Metelka and Craig Stephen. 2016. [Spatial data issues in geographical zoonoses research](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:300–319.

Prestige Tatenda Makanga, Nadine Schuurman, Charfudin Sacoor, Helena Boene, Peter von Dadelszen and Tabassum Firoz. 2016. [Guidelines for creating framework data for GIS analysis in low- and middle-income countries](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:320–332.

Weiran Yuchi, Anders Knudby, Joanna Cowper, Enkhjargal Gombojav, Ofer Amram, Blake Byron Walker and Ryan W. Allen. 2016. [A description of methods for deriving air pollution land use regression model predictor variables from remote sensing data in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:333–345.

Marina Jones, Tayyab Shah, Alyssa Hayes, Gerry Uswak and Scott Bell. 2016. [Dental service disparities in Canada: A Saskatoon, Saskatchewan case study](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:346–355.

Mehdi Aminipouri, Anders Knudby and Hung Chak Ho. 2016. [Using multiple disparate data sources to map heat vulnerability: Vancouver case study](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:356–368.

Research Papers

Andrea Choi. 2016. [Equity, race, and whiteness in Canadian geography](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:369–380.

Cheryl Teelucksingh, Blake Poland, Chris Buse and Rebecca Hasdell. 2016. [Environmental justice in the environmental non-governmental organization landscape of Toronto \(Canada\)](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:381–393.

Mathieu Carrier, Philippe Apparicio and Anne-Marie Séguin. 2016. [Road traffic noise geography during the night in Montreal: An environmental equity assessment](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien 60:394–405.



Trent University geography professor Mark Skinner named to Royal Society of Canada: Prof. Mark Skinner, a geography professor in the School of the Environment at Trent University, was one of 80 members named Tuesday to the Royal Society of Canada as a member of the College of New Scholars, Artists and Scientists. Skinner is a recent Canada research chair in rural aging, health and social care and the founding director of the Trent Centre of Aging and Society. He is considered an international expert on the role of volunteerism in supporting older people. As a Royal Society member, Skinner will work to provide guidance on issues of importance to Canadians, and promote Canadian achievements in the arts, humanities and sciences, according to a release. [Peterborough Examiner](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Julia Bentz, Fernando Lopes, Helena Calado and Philip Dearden. 2016. [Understanding diver motivation and specialization for improved scuba management](#). Tourism in Marine Environments.

DOI:10.3727/154427316X693216

Ryan Bullock and M. Reed. Towards an integrated system of communities and forests in Canada. In: [Community Forestry in Canada: Drawing Lessons from Policy and Practice](#). Editor: S. Teitelbaum. UBC Press.

Naoru Koizumi, Monica Gentili, Rajesh Ganesan, Debasree DasGupta, Amit Patel, Chun-Hung Chen, Nigel Waters and Keith Melancon. 2016. Mathematical Optimization and Simulation Analyses for Optimal Liver Allocation Boundaries. Pp. 451-75 In: [Healthcare Analytics: From Data to Knowledge to Healthcare Improvement](#). Editors: Hui Yang and Eva K. Lee. John Wiley & Sons. 451-475.

Roman Lukyanenko, Jeffrey Parsons, Yolanda, Wiersma, Renee Sieber and Mahed Maddah. 2016. [Participatory design for user-generated content systems: Understanding the challenges and moving forward](#). Scandinavian Journal of Information Systems 28: Article 2.

Michele-Lee Moore, Suzanne von der Porten and Heather Castleden. 2016. [Consultation is not consent: hydraulic fracturing and water governance on Indigenous lands in Canada](#). Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews. DOI:10.1002/wat2.1180

Denver V. Nixon and Lenore Newman. 2016. [The efficacy and politics of farmland preservation through land use regulation: Changes in southwest British Columbia's Agricultural Land Reserve](#). Land Use Policy 59:227–240.

J. Parkins, Ryan Bullock, B. Noble and M. Reed. Forests and communities on the fringe: An overview of community forestry in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. In: [Community Forestry in Canada: Drawing Lessons from Policy and Practice](#). Editor: S. Teitelbaum. UBC Press.

Ryan Plummer, Julia Baird, Ryan Bullock, Diane Dupont and teven Renzetti. 2016. [Probing the relationship between ecosystem perceptions and approaches to environmental governance: An exploratory content analysis of seven water dilemmas](#). Resilience: International Policies, Practices and Discourses. DOI:10.1080/21693293.2016.1202903

Mark D. Spalding, Imen Meliane, Nathan J. Bennett, Philip Dearden, Pawan G. Patil and Robert D. Brumbaugh. 2016. [Building towards the marine conservation end-game: consolidating the role of MPAs in a future ocean](#). Aquatic Conservation. Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems. DOI:10.1002/aqc.2686

Terah Sportel and René Véron. 2016. [Coconut crisis in Kerala? Mainstream narrative and alternative perspectives](#). Development and Change 47:1051–1077.

Other “Geographical” News

This is how the Department dies. The Life and Death of the Geography Department at Columbia:

Did you know that Columbia once had a geography department? I didn't. I had no idea that a fully operational department—with tenure-track professors and course listings and both undergraduate and graduate students—had once existed. Why did the geography department die? Who let it disappear? The geography department was officially created in 1965. It operated as a smaller program of study that drew in professors from a selection of departments across the University before shifting to a larger central administration. The hope was to attract high class talent with its new status as an “autonomous unit.” In only a few short years, the department began to visibly unravel. In the fall of 1972, assistant professor of geography Ian E. Manners chose not to return to Columbia. Another professor, John E. Oliver, also planned to leave the following summer when his term of appointment expired. These staffing problems forced the remaining professors to hastily redistribute teaching load and key classes among themselves. Six geography courses were cancelled that fall as a result: The Middle East and Agricultural Systems—both of which had been previously taught by Manners—General Climatology, Applied Climatology, Hydrology and Water Resources, and a seminar in Geographical and Environmental Systems. In becoming an “autonomous unit,” geography had severed its connections with other departments. They did not use professors from related areas of study nor share resources. They depended solely on the existing group of faculty and any extra funds that the University would give them. In 1986, the Planning and Budget Committee, which assesses and allocates resources to various departments, evaluated the understaffed department—which had once again requested funds to hire an additional faculty member. The committee finally declared that geography needed more than just a few new professors to thrive. The geography department went from having five professors to just two. This was a fatal shot. [The Eye](#)

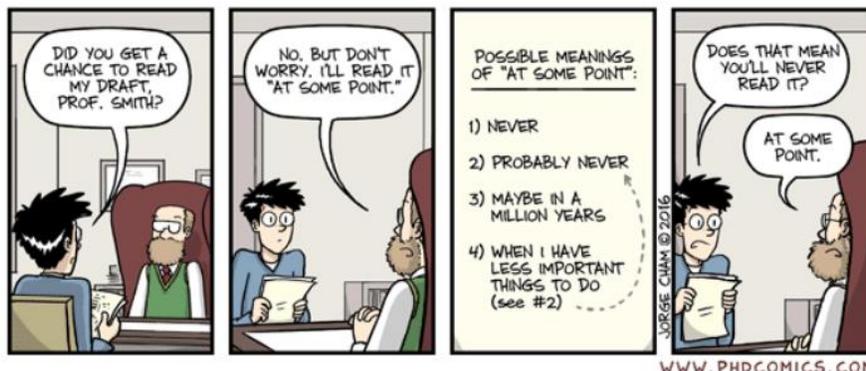
Academic mobbing, or how to become campus tormentors: If you're a university professor, chances are fairly good that you have initiated or participated in mobbing. Why? First, because mobbers are not sadists or sociopaths, but ordinary people; second, because universities are a type of organization that encourages mobbing; and third, as a result, mobbing is endemic at universities. Unlike bullying, an individual form of harassment in which a typical scenario consists of a boss victimizing an assistant, mobbing is a serious organizational deficiency. Many people think that universities are completely different from private companies or government agencies. They believe that they are unique places of freedom that stimulate intelligence, foster independence, value originality, promote collegiality, encourage pluralism and treat their members with respect, starting with the faculty. Unfortunately, the severity of mobbing in academic settings destroys that fantasy. In truth, universities are breeding grounds for mobbing, where aggressive tactics are used regularly. [University Affairs](#)

Southwest Nova Scotia droughts could increase with climate change: Charles Bourque, professor of hydrology and meteorology, said his research showed southwest Nova Scotia was a hotspot for drought. If the forecast models prove correct, the area would see a 24 per cent rise in mean temperature from today to 2040. He said the drought this year “fits the trends.” [CBCNews | Nova Scotia](#)

‘The New Normal’: California’s severe drought could last indefinitely: A grim new study led by a UCLA geography professor revealed that the current 5-year drought in California could last indefinitely, with the resulting arid conditions becoming "the new normal" for the state. The study, which looked at prolonged periods of dryness in California over the past 10,000 years, noted that the state's drought in the 21st century has been the most intense ever recorded, with drier than normal conditions in 10 of the past 14 years; the last three years have also been the hottest and driest in about 120 years. The radiative forcing that results from warming forces have the potential to extend drought-like conditions indefinitely, according to UCLA Professor Glen MacDonald, the study's lead author and an expert on drought and climate change. Radiative forcing in the past appears to have had catastrophic effects in extending droughts," MacDonald said. "When you have arid periods that persist for 60 years, as we did in the 12th century, or for millennia, as we did from 6,000 to 1,000 B.C., that's not really a 'drought,'" he said. "That aridity is the new normal." [KTLA5](#)

Warmer oceans bringing more severe tropical cyclones to land: Tropical cyclones can cause devastating and lethal damage to East and Southeast Asian countries. But accurately tracking changes in the frequency and intensity of typhoons is challenging in part because the data on these storms hasn't always been consistently kept, and in part because there's simply a lot of variability in the number of storms that make landfall. New cluster and bias-corrected analyses of storm data show that the intensity and frequency of these dangerous storms have increased considerably. This increase is most likely due to oceanic warming related to climate change. The analysis showed that the frequency of typhoons that make landfall has increased 12 to 15 percent in the last 37 years. In addition to the increase in typhoon frequency, there has been a marked and significant increase in Category 4 or Category 5 storms, which are the most dangerous and deadly. This doesn't mean that the number of storms increased, just that more of the storms that made landfall were strong enough to be rated typhoons. [ars Technica](#)

Some Not So “Geographical” News



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