



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
No. 455, October 3, 2017**

Compiled by Dan Smith [<cag@geog.uvic.ca>](mailto:cag@geog.uvic.ca)

U Waterloo’s Nancy Worth finds Toronto millennials are living at home to save money, not because they're lazy: A new report from the University of Waterloo reveals nearly 80 per cent of young adults who live with their parents do so to save money. And many others are sticking it out because they can't afford Toronto's pricey rent, need to pay off debt, or want to ward off the financial sting of job insecurity — which the researchers say puts to bed stereotypes about lazy, live-at-home millennials (who have no money because they're avocado toast addicts, apparently). Instead, it's more about coping with rising housing costs and precarious work, explains researcher Nancy Worth, a geography professor at the university. "If you're unsure that you'll have a job that will pay your next mortgage payment, or your next rent on the first of the month, living at home is a way of mitigating that insecurity," she says. The Waterloo survey also found living with their parents is not a burden for most young people, with 70 per cent saying they're satisfied, or very satisfied, with their lives while living at home. [CBCNews | Toronto](#)

U British Columbia’s David Ley make the case for more taxation as answer to Vancouver housing woes: Don't be distracted by claims from the real estate industry that adding more housing supply will solve Metro Vancouver's broken housing system. David Ley, a professor emeritus in the University of British Columbia's Department of Geography, highlighted the staggering, and widening, disconnect between local incomes and house prices. Ley highlighted a measure of affordability developed by the Demographia survey: housing is considered severely unaffordable at a rate of 5.1, and Vancouver is currently rated at 11.8. Since July 2016, foreign nationals buying property in Metro Vancouver must pay an additional 15 per cent property transfer tax. While single family home sales flattened for a time, they've begun to rebound, while the condo market has taken over when it comes to speculative frenzy. Vancouver has also introduced an empty homes tax: one per cent of the home's assessed value if it is not occupied for at least six months of the year. Ley urged government leaders to consider more taxation that targets buyers whose purchases are not supported by local incomes, such as a progressive property tax that could be offset by income tax paid. Vancouver is now attempting to “gently” increase density in single family neighbourhoods, but has faced criticism for not allowing denser buildings like townhouses and low-rise apartment buildings in all single family zones. But Ley said he thought an “incremental” approach, using infill options like basement suites and laneway houses, was the right one. “With supply, we always need to put an adjective in front of the word supply: it's affordable supply. You do not need more million dollar-plus condo or townhouse units, which is typically what's been provided,” he said. “New supply might decrease overall affordability, by driving up land prices through speculative land assembly when land zoning is anticipated — as we see happening along many of the thoroughfares.” [Vancouver Metro](#)

U Regina's Emily Eaton reports that something amiss in Saskatchewan's oilpatch: On Sunday, National Observer published the first two chapters of an unprecedented Canada-wide investigation called *The Price of Oil*. It's the largest national journalism collaboration in Canadian history. The first two stories reveal an astonishing set of industry compliance failures that occurred over five years with the knowledge of the provincial government in Saskatchewan. Many of them dealt with hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), a gas that in high concentrations is deadly to humans. These articles detail what took place behind closed doors between industry and government in the prairie province as public complaints of sickness and injury piled up. In May of 2014, a worker died on the job from exposure to H₂S. Where were the public danger warnings? What did the Saskatchewan government do to mitigate the risks? Like many major investigations, this one started with a tip. Emily Eaton, a University of Regina geography professor and member of the Corporate Mapping Project, told Patti Sonntag that something was amiss in Saskatchewan's oilpatch when it came to H₂S, and media coverage of incidents involving the toxic substance. [National Observer](#)

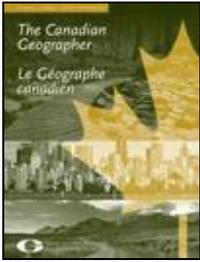
U British Columbia's Karen Bakker named Pierre Elliot Trudeau Foundation Fellow for research on Indigenous water security: Karen Bakker is a professor in University of British Columbia (UBC)'s geography department and holds the title of Canada Research Chair in Political Ecology. Bakker is also the founding director and current co-director of the Program on Water Governance, which is an interdisciplinary collaborative team studying issues such as water security, water privatization and Indigenous water governance. The Sustainable Water Governance and Indigenous Law Project is one of the Program on Water Governance's projects. Her fellowship is "Unceded waters: Indigenous water governance in Canada" which is a response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. She expects to co-organize and co-host a learning-from-the-land Water Bush Camp; to produce a co-edited book titled *Decolonizing Water*; to create a free, accessible online portal associated with the book; and to implement a communications strategy designed to maximize public engagement. [The Lawyer's Daily](#) | [The Ubysssey](#)

Memorial U Ph.D. candidate Ken Carter co-authors opinion on governance for the rural knowledge economy: The emergence of the knowledge-based economy, characterized by rapid technological change and the onset of globalization, has had profound impacts on the organization of developed economies. These changes have obliged developed economies to adapt and, indeed, the forces of innovation and creative destruction have highlighted the importance of economic agility, learning, and innovation. Not surprisingly, the era of what some call "dynamic capitalism" has thus far largely favoured central urban spaces with their agglomeration economies, knowledge infrastructure, and ability to attract the creative class. But rapid change has also become a hallmark of peripheral or rural resource-based economies during recent decades with demographic shifts, out-migration, declining resource employment, and economic upheaval. The onslaught of dynamic capitalism in many rural places has had negative outcomes, which calls into question the ability of rural spaces to adapt to technological change, globalization, and the entrepreneurial economy. Rural adaptation, change, and resilience are needed in the face of the challenges presented by globalization, the knowledge-based economy, and resource-based rural dependency. [The Telegram](#)



@UVicGeog welcomes Shannon Fargey as tenure-track Assistant Teaching Professor at the University of Victoria. Dr. Fargey has considerable experience teaching a diverse array of undergraduate and graduate level courses in the fields of Physical Geography, Geomatics and Environmental Sustainability. [Homepage](#) | [Research Gate](#)

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



Paulina Marczak and Renée Sieber. 2017. [Linking legislative openness to open data in Canada](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI: 10.1111/cag.12408

Legislatures, those bodies of elected officials, are increasingly attuned to the rhetoric of open data for legislative content like bills and Hansards. This rhetoric dictates that government content should be freely accessible, repurposable, machine-readable, standardized across subregions, and available without licensing restrictions. Canada offers an excellent example of renewed emphasis on openness across jurisdictions. The call for legislative openness also derives from open data advocates, who seek to apply the rules of open data to unstructured information. We do not know whether legislative openness in Canada, at the provincial and territorial level, matches the rhetoric of open data. This study focused on commonly occurring categories of information on subnational legislative websites, and examined their copyright, availability, archivability, information timeliness, and plain language descriptions. Legislatures were contacted about current practices in the form of a web survey with follow-up phone interviews. We collected additional information via a web content analysis. Results indicated that a considerable amount of information was available, although generally at minimal levels of compliance and with significant variance across legislatures. Respondents expressed confusion about the extent of actual versus perceived openness of their information. We hope these findings provoke a subnational dialogue on legislative openness across Canada.

Pablo Mendez. 2017. [Linkages between the formal and informal sectors in a Canadian housing market: Vancouver and its secondary suite rentals](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12410

Mapping linkages between the formal and informal sectors is a key area of study in the informal markets literature, particularly in research that focuses on low-income economic actors in the global south. This paper extends that literature both spatially and sociologically by exploring an instance of market informality practiced by middle-class households in the global north, specifically the market in unauthorized secondary suite rentals in Vancouver. Secondary suites (also known as accessory dwelling units) are self-contained apartments typically built by retrofitting the basement, garage, or attic of a house—in some cases without adhering to existing regulations. As in other cities, homeowners in Vancouver often rent out these apartments regardless of the unit's legal status. Through an analysis of more than 30 interviews conducted with homeowner-landlords of unauthorized secondary suites in the city, a mapping of formal-informal linkages in this rental housing submarket is undertaken. This local-level mapping exercise also examines how municipal enforcement policy and federal housing and taxation policy relate to these linkages, highlighting contradictions within and between municipal, provincial, and federal scales of government.

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

- Lin Chen, Wenbing Yu, Yan Lu and Weibo Liu. 2017. [Numerical simulation on the performance of thermosyphon adopted to mitigate thaw settlement of embankment in sandy permafrost zone](#). Applied Thermal Energy. doi.org/10.1016/j.applthermaleng.2017.09.130
- Ann Dale, Sarah Burch, John Robinson and Chris Strashok. 2018. [Multilevel governance of sustainability transitions in Canada: Policy alignment, innovation, and evaluation](#). In: Climate Change in Cities. Hughes S., Chu E. and Mason S. (eds). The Urban Book Series. Springer, Cham. 343-358.
- Rebecca Edwards and Paul Treitz. 2017. [Vegetation greening trends at two sites in the Canadian Arctic: 1984–2015](#). Arctic, Antarctic, and Alpine Research.
- Piers Evans and Carissa D. Brown. 2017. [The boreal–temperate forest ecotone response to climate change](#). Environmental Reviews. doi.org/10.1139/er-2017-0009
- Noel Fitzpatrick, Valentina Radić and Brian Menounos. 2017. [Surface energy balance closure and turbulent flux parameterization on a mid-latitude mountain glacier, Purcell Mountains, Canada](#). Frontiers in Earth Science. doi.org/10.3389/feart.2017.00067
- Jordan Graesser and Navin Ramankutty. 2017. [Detection of cropland field parcels from Landsat imagery](#). Remote Sensing of Environment 201:165-180.
- Joseph Kangmennaang, Paul Mkandawire and Isaac Luginaah. 2017. [Breast cancer screening among women in Namibia: explaining the effect of health insurance coverage and access to information on screening behaviours](#). Global Health Promotion. doi.org/10.1177/1757975917727017
- Weixun Lu, David E. Atkinson and Nathaniel K. Newlands. 2017. [ENSO climate risk: predicting crop yield variability and coherence using cluster-based PCA](#). In: Modeling Earth Systems and Environment. doi.org/10.1007/s40808-017-0382-0
- Catrina A. MacKenzie. 2017. [Finding meaning: a cross-language mixed-methods research strategy](#). In: Handbook of Research Methods in Health Social Sciences. Pranee Liamputtong (Ed.) Springer Singapore. DOI:10.1007/978-981-10-2779-6_37-1
- Graham McDowell and Michele Koppes. 2017. [Robust adaptation research in high mountains: Integrating the scientific, social, and ecological dimensions of glacio-hydrological change](#). Water. DOI:10.3390/w9100739
- Scott Morton Ninomiya and Sarah Burch. 2018. [Beyond “The Business Case”: The emerging role of entrepreneurs in the multilevel governance of urban decarbonization in Canada](#). In: Climate Change in Cities. Hughes S., Chu E. and Mason S. (eds). The Urban Book Series. Springer, Cham. 325-342.
- B.D. Plumb, W.K. Annable, P.J. Thompson and M.A. Hassa. 017. [The impact of urbanization on temporal changes in sediment transport in a gravel-bed channel in southern Ontario, Canada](#). Water Resources Research. DOI:10.1002/2016WR020288
-

David A. Sacco, Brent C. Ward, Olav B. Lian, Denny E. Maynard and Marten Geertsema. 2017. [Quaternary geology of part of the McLeod Lake map area \(NTS 093J\), central British Columbia: lithostratigraphy, glacial history, and chronology](#). Canadian Journal of Earth Sciences 54:1063-1084.

Ian Spooner, Sarah Principato, Nicholas Hill, Hilary White, Dewey Dunnington, Tom Neily and Susann Stolze. 2017. [Late Holocene records of changing moisture regime from wetlands in southwestern Nova Scotia, Canada: Implications for wetland conservation and restoration](#). Northeastern Naturalist 24:331-348.

CAGONT

Canadian Association of Geographers - Ontario Division



The Canadian Association of Geographers-Ontario Division annual meeting will be hosted by Queen's University on **October 20-21, 2017**. The theme of the conference is Geographical Perspectives: Approaching a Complex World.

Please see the [conference website](#) for more details

Other "Geographical" News

Facing poverty, academics turn to sex work and sleeping in cars: Sex work is one of the more unusual ways that adjuncts have avoided living in poverty, and perhaps even homelessness. A quarter of part-time college academics (many of whom are adjuncts, though it's not uncommon for adjuncts to work 40 hours a week or more) are said to be enrolled in public assistance programs. They resort to food banks and Goodwill, and there is even an adjuncts' cookbook that shows how to turn items like beef scraps, chicken bones and orange peel into meals. And then there are those who are either on the streets or teetering on the edge of losing stable housing. The adjunct who turned to sex work makes several thousand dollars per course, and teaches about six per semester. She estimates that she puts in 60 hours a week. But she struggles to make ends meet after paying \$1,500 in monthly rent and with student loans that, including interest, amount to a few hundred thousand dollars. Her income from teaching comes to \$40,000 a year. [The Guardian](#)

UK's longest-lasting patch of snow melts away: An 11-year-old patch of snow has melted away on Britain's third highest mountain. Known as the Sphinx, the snow at Garbh Choire Mor on Braeriach is historically the longest-lasting in Scotland's mountains. Experts believe snow at that spot has now only disappeared completely seven times in the last 300 years. Affectionately known by climbers and walkers as "Scotland's glacier", it last melted in 2006. [BBC News](#)

Swiss glaciers lost 3 to 4 percent ice in the last year alone: Swiss glaciers lost three to four percent of their total volume, but smaller glaciers lost even more, as snowfall was also lower than average during this period. This year's loss of ice, in what was Switzerland's third hottest year since records began, is being compared to 2003 – the hottest summer on record in Switzerland – when an estimated average of 4.5 percent of ice disappeared from glaciers. Between 80 and 90 percent of Swiss glaciers could melt by 2100, estimates a specialist from ETH Zurich. [The Local](#)

Some Not So “Geographical” News



The CAG works for geographers on [Twitter](#). Keep up-to-date by following [@CanGeographers](#)
GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>
@CanGeographers Weekly: <https://paper.li/CanGeographers/1394987315>
