



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers  
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**Brock U's Ebru Ustundag uses teaching as political tool:** Ebru Ustundag thought becoming a professor would allow her to teach students. But in her 11 years at Brock University, she has found it's the students who teach her. Ustundag, Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Geography and Tourism Studies, believes in teaching as a political tool as well as the concept of the classroom being a contested space. She is grateful to have and use the space, and to both learn from and challenge her students. Challenge takes many forms, from asking students to create their own assignments to inviting them to build curriculum with her; integrating feminist and racialized geographies and asking students to determine what is missing from the course outline. In her graduate seminars, Ustundag sometimes develops 20 weeks of content for a 12-week semester. She then works with the students to decide which topics will be included in this particular iteration of the course, based on the collective interests and priorities of the students. She often emails undergraduate students ahead of the semester to ask what they're most keen to learn about and encourages students to pursue research that matters to them in a form they can relate to. For example, she has suggested they create an episode of a podcast they like or pitch a show to Netflix on the issue they've studied. Ustundag also encourages deep dives into course material. Fourth-year students write reaction papers in response to assigned readings, which they submit ahead of class. Ustundag returns the paper with feedback before the session takes place, so that when discussion starts, the students have already begun working through their ideas. "It's time-consuming," Ustundag concedes. "But it creates a different relationship between myself and the students, and between the students and the material." Her students appreciate her passion, expertise and generosity, as shown by their nomination of Ustundag for an Ontario Undergraduate Students Alliance (OUSA) Teaching Excellence Award. The OUSA Teaching Excellence Award recognizes educators who excel at unlocking the potential of Ontario's young people. On the OUSA blog, a tribute to Ustundag cites her ability to inspire students: One of her students described their experience with her as, "the ignition of a fire within me and my peers; she gave us the courage and the tools to make positive change in our world." [The Brock News](#)

**U British Columbia's Daniel Hiebert reports that Canada's immigration targets 'a form of housing policy':** There is no doubt Canada's high immigration rates have a major impact on housing affordability in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, according to a new study. "First and foremost, immigration policy is, essentially, also a form of housing policy," University of B.C. geographer Daniel Hiebert says. "Metropolitan housing in Canada would, very likely, look totally different if the scale of immigration were to change dramatically in either direction. The recent decision to raise permanent immigration admission levels from approximately 270,000 in 2015 to 340,000 in 2020 will surely have a

significant impact,” Hiebert said. Most immigrants show greater determination than Canadian-born citizens to buy housing in Canada’s three major cities, said Hiebert, who also studied buying and renting patterns along ethnic lines. The elevated home-ownership rate among ethnic Chinese immigrants in the expensive cities of Vancouver and Toronto is “striking,” Hiebert said. “The rate of home ownership among individuals declaring Chinese origins is exceptionally high for newcomers: Over seven in 10 of those who arrived in Canada between 2006 and 2011 reside in households that own a home,” he said. The discovery that most new Chinese immigrants can afford to buy housing within a few years of arriving in Canada — at a rate higher than the overall Vancouver average of 69 per cent — supports numerous reports that have indicated many new immigrants from East Asia are making their purchases with large amounts of capital earned in their homelands. Recent Chinese immigrants to Toronto and Vancouver have a home-ownership rate of nearly 73 per cent “and a propensity to dedicate a very high portion of their income to housing. Given the scale of immigration of individuals from China, Hong Kong and Taiwan to Vancouver, it is likely that this group is having an impact on the metropolitan housing market as a whole.” [Vancouver Sun](#)

**U Toronto’s Matti Siemiatycki on requirement that Ontario infrastructure projects face new environmental and job-training requirements:** Contractors on Ontario infrastructure projects will face new environmental and job-training requirements as the province moves ahead with a \$150.3-billion, 13-year infrastructure plan. Matti Siemiatycki, a University of Toronto associate professor of planning and geography and an unpaid adviser on the Ontario program, understands the concerns about the added planning and cost of LCAs and other analysis. But he says these measures will ensure the right projects get built. “There is an impetus to push the money out the door as fast as possible,” Siemiatycki says. “But if you are investing in the wrong project, it is going to be a short-lived economic stimulus.” The Insurance Bureau of Canada, which represents 90% of the property and casualty insurance market, supports the new rules. [Engineering News-Record](#)

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**U Calgary’s Chris Hugenholtz** received support from the Federal Government for the *Calgary Centre for Smart Emissions Sensing Technologies* that he leads. [Calgary UToday](#)

**Memorial U’s Benjamin Misiuk**, a doctoral student in the Department of Geography, placed third in a poster competition during the recent International Arctic Change conference. The title of his presentation was Two Ways of Seabed Mapping: Benthic Habitat Maps Produced Using Science and Local Knowledge “The work I presented was collaborative though, with contributions from each of my co-authors. These were my supervisors, Drs. Trevor Bell and Evan Edinger from Memorial; Teresa Tufts, Manasie Kendall, a Memorial geography alumnus; Janelle Kennedy, Government of Nunavut; and Dr. Alec Aitken from the University of Saskatchewan.” [Memorial Gazette](#)

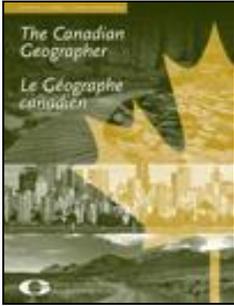
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### Recent Theses and Dissertations

Rebecca Pero. 2017. [The new local governance of immigration in Canada: Local immigration partnerships and their role in immigrant settlement and integration in small- and medium-sized cities in Ontario](#). PhD dissertation. Department of Geography and Planning at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario. Supervisors: Audrey Kobayashi and David Murakami Wood.

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



Mark Gahegan. 2017. [Our GIS is too small](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12434

GIScience and GISystems have been successful in tackling many geographical problems over the last 30 years. But technologies and associated theory can become limiting if they end up defining how we see the world and what we believe are worthy and tractable research problems. This paper explores some of the limitations currently impacting GISystems and GIScience from the perspective of technology and community, contrasting GIScience with other informatics communities and their practices. It explores several themes: (i) GIScience and the informatics revolution; (ii) the lack of a community-owned innovation platform for GIScience research; (iii) the computational limitations imposed by desktop computing and the inability to scale up analysis; (iv) the continued failure to support the temporal dimension, and especially dynamic processes and models with feedbacks; (v) the challenge of embracing a wider and more heterogeneous view of geographical representation and analysis; and (vi) the urgent need to foster an active software development community to redress some of these shortcomings. A brief discussion then summarizes the issues and suggests that GIScience needs to work harder as a community to become more relevant to the broader geographic field and meet a bigger set of representation, analysis, and modelling needs.

Stefan W. Kienzle. 2017. [Has it become warmer in Alberta? Mapping temperature changes for the period 1950–2010 across Alberta, Canada](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12432

When a Canada-wide daily climate time series, covering the period 1950–2010, became available, an opportunity arose to analyze the time series for trends of a variety of temperature indices. The 6,833 climate grid cells covering Alberta, each with an area of 10 km by 10 km, allowed the detailed mapping of 30 temperature indices across the province. From each time series, an annual series was computed, which then enabled trend analyses using the non-parametric Mann-Kendall and Sen Slope tests. New maps could be created at an unprecedented spatial resolution, and an associated website was developed to access all trends and changes between 1950 and 2010 for all grid cells at [albertaclimaterecords.com](http://albertaclimaterecords.com). The confidence levels of some temperature trends exceed 99%, while others are below 80%. In Alberta's south, annual average temperatures have increased by 1°C to 2°C since the 1950s, but in Alberta's north the increase is 2°C to 4°C. The growing season has lengthened by between one and five weeks since the 1950s, while the number of frost days has declined. The most significant trends observed were increases in mean annual and winter temperatures, and declines in the number of days below -20°C and heating degree days.

## Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

- April S. Dalton, Sarah A. Finkelstein, Peter J. Barnett, Minna Väiliranta and Steven L. Forman. 2017. [Late Pleistocene chronology, palaeoecology and stratigraphy at a suite of sites along the Albany River, Hudson Bay Lowlands, Canada](#). Palaeogeography, Palaeoclimatology, Palaeoecology. doi.org/10.1016/j.palaeo.2017.12.011
- Marten Geertsema, Andrée Blais-Stevens, Eva Kwolld, Brian Menounos, Jeremy Venditti, Alain Grenier and Kelsey Wiebe. 2017. [Sensitive clay landslide detection and characterization in and around Lakelse Lake, British Columbia, Canada](#). Sedimentary Geology. doi.org/10.1016/j.sedgeo.2017.12.025
- Sylvia Y. He, Eric J. Miller and Darren M. Scott. 2017. [Big data and travel behaviour](#). Travel Behaviour and Society. doi.org/10.1016/j.tbs.2017.12.003
- Fan Huang, Wenfeng Zhan, Zhihua Wang, Kaicun Wang, Jing M. Chen, Yongxue Liu, Jiameng Lai and Weimin Ju. 2017. [Positive or negative? Urbanization-induced variations in diurnal skin-surface temperature range detected using satellite data](#). Journal of Geophysical Research. Atmospheres. DOI:10.1002/2017JD027021
- B. Mehdi, K. Schulz, Ludwig F. Ferber and B. Lehner. 2017. [Evaluating the importance of non-unique behavioural parameter sets on surface water quality variables under climate change conditions in a mesoscale agricultural watershed](#). Water Resources Management. doi.org/10.1007/s11269-017-1830-3
- Glen Norcliffe. 2017. [National identity, club citizenship, and the formation of the Canadian Wheelman's Association, 1883–87](#). Journal of Canadian Studies 51:461-484.
- Sasha Nasonova, Randall K. Scharien, Christian Haas and Stephen E. L. Howell. 2018. [Linking regional winter sea ice thickness and surface roughness to spring melt pond fraction on landfast Arctic sea ice](#). Remote Sensing 10:37. DOI:10.3390/rs10010037
- Nastaran Saberi, Richard Kelly, Peter Toose, Alexandre Roy and Chris Derksen. 2017. [Modeling the observed microwave emission from shallow multi-layer tundra snow using DMRT-ML](#). Remote Sensing.
- David Sadoway and Govind Gopakumar. 2017. [\(Un\) bundling Bangalore: Infrastructure bundling 'best practices' and assembling novel scapes](#). Geoforum 79:46-57.

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### Other "Geographical" News

**How common are these frigid Winnipeg temperatures?** Environment Canada issued an extreme cold warning advisory as temperatures dipped below -30 C in Winnipeg. With a bombardment of news coverage about dead car batteries in need of a boost, interruptions in mail delivery, inoperable trains due to frozen equipment and homeless shelters bursting at the seams, it can be easy to lose sight of just how common these conditions are in Winnipeg. Historical weather data from Environment Canada shows that since 1999 the temperature has dipped below -25 C an average of 14 times per year. While 2017, will be below average (10 days colder than -25 C so far), 2008 registered 33 days where the temperatures dipped below -25 C. During the winter of 2013-14, when thousands of Winnipeggers were waterless due to frozen water pipes, the temperature dipped below -25 C on 37 occasions. [CBCNews Manitoba](#)

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Some Not So “Geographical” News



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