



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers
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Vancouver Island U's Pamela Shaw, a 3M Teaching Follow: Pam Shaw was a self-described "uninspired" undergraduate at the University of Alberta until she met a geography professor with a passion for urban planning. "He infected me with his passion and enthusiasm," Shaw says of Peter J. Smith, who taught at the U of A's department of geography until his retirement in 1997. Now, Shaw continues to spread the contagion to her own students. She spent two decades working in urban planning roles across Alberta and British Columbia, but was lured back to academia by the University of Victoria's Larry McCann, who accepted her as a Ph.D. student and quickly put her in front of a classroom, where Shaw found another passion. "Every day I have the extraordinary opportunity not only to teach, but to help students find their path—find their way to something that sets their minds alight," she says. "What an incredible job to have! Every day, I leave the campus knowing I've helped students move one more notch toward their full potential." One of the things that make Shaw such an effective teacher is her fervent belief that urban planning actually matters. She ensures her students have practical skills that they get to test immediately in the communities served by Vancouver Island University. Shaw credits her pragmatic pedagogical approach to the 20 years she spent as a professional planner between her master's and her Ph.D. "You don't have the luxury of engaging in activities just for the fun of that activity—you need to be getting something done," she says. "I'm always looking for ways to engage students, share and gain knowledge and apply it in practical ways."

[Maclean's](#)

U Alberta geographer Jahan Kariyeva reports Alberta's natural ecosystems shrinking faster than Amazon rainforest: Alberta's ecosystems and the natural beauty they create are still largely intact but parts are disappearing at rates that exceed deforestation in the Amazon rain forest. "We continue to lose ecosystems," said researcher Jahan Kariyeva. "That we can definitely see." Kariyeva, a University of Alberta geographer, is lead author on the latest report from the Alberta Biodiversity Monitoring Institute, an arm's-length research body overseen by industry, government and non-governmental organizations. Its most complete study on the human footprint across Alberta has found that 70 per cent of the province is still untouched. Most of that is in the north. At the turn of the century, just over one-quarter of Alberta was disturbed by agriculture, communities, forestry, energy and other developments. Now, the total is almost 30 per cent. That's an area equal to 3 1/2 times the size of Banff National Park. Most of that disturbance comes from logging. Changes are coming most quickly in the foothills, a vast area along the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains subject to pressures from forestry, energy, residential development and recreation. The study says disturbance in the foothills has gone from less than one-fifth in 1999 to 29 per cent in 2015, most from forestry. That's about a 60 per cent increase in disturbance -- almost twice the rate in the Amazon over the same time span. In Alberta's oilsands, developed land has increased by 75 per cent. The report points out that's still only 8.4 per cent of the entire forest ecosystem in the area. Kariyeva said the study should help politicians and land-use planners make better decisions. [CBCNews | Edmonton](#)

McGill U's Brian E. Robinson coordinating Social Science activities on project exploring ways to reduce health inequalities in cities around the world: A major new research partnership has been launched to explore ways of reducing health inequalities in cities around the world. Coordinated from London, the partnership comprises two integrated urban health projects. Their aim is to provide the evidence needed to help policy makers and governments take actions to improve the health of their populations and the planet, in a way that minimizes health inequality. The researchers will work closely with 10 cities to gather local data and then use computer modelling to test policies, such as safe low-income housing or large public transport systems, to see whether they are likely to be successful. The various projects will be brought together in the London Hub for Urban Health, Sustainability and Equality, creating one of the world's leading research hubs in this field. It will combine the research from cities across the world to build up a picture of urban health for most of the world's populations. Geography professor Brian E. Robinson, is coordinating Social Science activities on the project and, in conjunction with Christopher Barrington-Leigh, a professor in the Institute of Health and Social Policy (IHSP) and the McGill School of Environment, will lead policy analysis, modelling, and evaluating social inequality across the project sites. "Cities are dynamic systems that are constantly changing through individual and public actions", says Robinson. "Those actions can have big consequences for human health and for the planet, especially for poor and marginalized communities. That's why this program covers high income countries like Canada and developing countries like Bangladesh and Ghana."

[McGill Newsroom](#)

U Waterloo's Tara Vinodrai co-authors study highlighting downside of LRTs: Much of the new development planned along the Kitchener-Waterloo LRT route is mixed-use, blending residential development with shops, offices and other businesses in a pedestrian-friendly mix. But a new study out of the University of Waterloo suggests this type of development has a serious downside: It may be too pricey for many of us. It looked at mixed-use neighbourhoods in Toronto between 1991 and 2006 and found that housing in mixed-use zones was the least affordable, compared to housing in other parts of the city and in the larger Toronto area. That lack of affordability hit some occupations more: Those working in tech, banking and other high-paying service jobs were actually more able to afford the mixed-use housing. But people in lower-paying jobs such as sales and services or manufacturing either moved away from mixed-use areas, or ended up paying a higher percentage of their income on housing. "That leads to inequality in the city, and segregation," said Tara Vinodrai, a geography professor at the University of Waterloo and one of the authors of the study. "You push lower-income occupations out of those neighbourhoods." While the housing market in Waterloo Region is different than Toronto's, the study has some relevance, since much of the new development going up along the LRT corridor in Waterloo Region is mixed-use, said Markus Moos, a planning professor at UW who also worked on the study. Mixed-use neighbourhoods exemplify "smart growth" that offers many benefits: More intense housing, near shops and jobs, has many benefits. It reduces sprawl, it promotes walking, transit and cycling over car use, and it helps create lively, diverse neighbourhoods. [TheRecord.com](#)

Canadian Association of Geographers - Ontario Division (CAGONT) held its Annual Meeting at Queen's University from October 20-21, 2017. Presented at the conference were 116 oral papers, 18 posters, an evening panel session and a plenary lecture by Dr. Audrey Kobayashi. Jennifer Langill (University of Toronto) received the award for Best Masters Paper "*The Relevance of James Scott's the Moral Economy of the Peasant (1976) in Present-Day Peasant Studies*". The Best Student Posters were awarded to Alyssa Aiello (Queen's University) for "*An Analysis of Canadian News Media in 2016 on the Portrayal of Indigenous Leadership in Renewable Energy Projects*", and to Margot Flemming (University of Waterloo) for "*Validation of remotely sensed snow products in the Grand River Watershed*". The 2018 CAGONT 2018 Annual Meeting will be held at the University of Toronto – St. George in October 2018. Full conference report available at [CAGONT2017](#)

Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Jonathan Andrews. 2017. [Climate change and sea ice: shipping in Hudson Bay, James Bay, Hudson Strait, and Foxe Basin](#). MEnv thesis. Department of Environment and Geography, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Supervisor: David Barber.

Kathryn Furlong, Tatiana Acevedo Guerrero, Jeimy Arias and Camila Patiño Sanchez. 2018. [Rethinking water corporatisation: a 'negotiation space' for public and private interests, Colombia \(1910-2000\)](#). Water Alternatives 11:187-208.

Éric Lavigne, Marc-André Bélair, Daniel Rodriguez Duque, Minh T. Do, David M. Stieb, Perry Hystad, Aaron van Donkelaar, Randall V. Martin, Daniel L. Crouse, Eric Crighton, Hong Chen, Richard T. Burnett, Scott Weichenthal, Paul J. Villeneuve, Teresa To, Jeffrey R. Brook, Markey Johnson, Sabit Cakmak, Abdool S. Yasseen III and Mark Walker. 2018. [Effect modification of perinatal exposure to air pollution and childhood asthma incidence](#). European Respiratory Journal. DOI:10.1183/13993003.01884-2017

Michele-Lee Moore, Karena Shaw and Heather Castleden. 2018. ["We need more data!" The politics of scientific information for water governance in the context of hydraulic fracturing](#). Water Alternatives 11:142-162.

Alejandra Orozco Quintero and Leslie King. 2018. [A cartography of dispossession: assessing spatial reorganization in state-led conservation in Saadani, Tanzania](#). Journal of Political Ecology 25.

Jason Thistlethwaite, Daniel Henstra, Craig Brown and Daniel Scott. 2018. [How flood experience and risk perception influences protective actions and behaviours among Canadian homeowners](#). Environmental Management 61:197–208.

A.C. VanderZaag, S. Burtt, X. Vergé, S. Piquette, T. Wright, R. Kroebel and R. Gordon. 2018. [Case Study: Water budget of a dairy farm with a tie-stall barn for milk cows and summer pasturing of heifers and dry cows](#). The Professional Animal Scientist 34:108–117.

Phillipe Wernette, Chris Houser, Bradley A. Weymer, Mark E. Everett, Michael P. Bishop and Bobby Reece. 2018. [Influence of a spatially complex framework geology on barrier island geomorphology](#). Marine Geology 398:151–162.

Bingliang Zhuang, Tijian Wang, Jane Liu, Huizheng Che, Yong Han, Yu Fu, Shu Li, Min Xie, Mengmeng Li, Pulong Chen, Huimin Chen, Xiu-qun Yang and Jianning Sun. 2018. [The optical properties, physical properties and direct radiative forcing of urban columnar aerosols in the Yangtze River Delta, China](#). Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics 18:1419-1436.

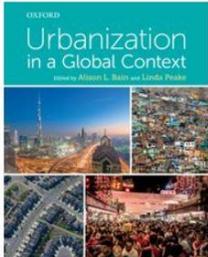
Recent Theses and Dissertations

Katie Davidson. 2017. [Influences of marine subsidies on coastal mammal ecology](#). MSc thesis. Department of Geography, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia. Supervisor: Chris Darimont.

Rebeca Salas. 2018. [Spatial narratives of property loss: a geographical perspective on the relationship between memory and property](#). MA thesis. Department of Geography, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia. Supervisor: Nicholas Blomley.

New Book

Alison L. Bain and Linda Peake (Editors). 2017. [Urbanization in a Global Context](#). Oxford University Press. 496 pp. ISBN 9780199021536



Urbanization in a Global Context is a contributed text that helps Canadian students understand the process of urbanization by examining cities outside Canada across the global North and South. Truly international in its approach, it emphasizes the interconnectedness of urban places and fosters analysis that identifies the similarities and differences between cities in different world regions. Each chapter focuses on different contemporary urban issues - ranging from urban policy, climate change, and gender to transportation and water governance - and introduces current urban scholarly debates, grounding them in international case studies. How these issues resonate with the Canadian urban context is discussed in text boxes, which employ descriptive accounts, drawing on examples from a selection of small-, mid-, and large-sized Canadian cities. Activities and questions at the end of each chapter prompt students to collaborate with peers to further critically reflect upon how these urban issues could relate to their lived experience in Canadian cities.

Other “Geographical” News

Urbanism for eight-year-olds. Urbanism? Affordability? Neighbourhood change? It turns out eight year olds are also plugged into conversations about urbanism, affordability and neighbourhood change in Vancouver. Lindsay Causey of independent school Stratford Hall is teaching a unit on “how we organize ourselves.” Students are learning about decisions we make as a society and their impact on people and the environment. They’ve touched on human geography and urban issues. Ms. Causey picked up a Metro one morning that had my story “Goodbye to the Vancouver we know?” on the growth of rich and poor enclaves in the region and a loss of diversity and mobility. She read it to her class. “Heavy stuff for Grade 3, but somehow we manage to navigate it,” she said. They just read a story about polar bears and climate change and talked about what it’s like to be displaced. [Vancouver Metro](#)

Centennial Flame upgrade project costs Canadian taxpayers: The recent makeover of the Centennial Flame on Parliament Hill saw almost every piece of the original 1966 monument now replaced with newer materials. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau unveiled the updated monument, which was given a 13th wedge last fall to represent Nunavut. The Arctic territory came into existence in 1999, long after the popular centennial project was completed. The original design included wedges with shields, dates and floral emblems representing all 10 provinces and two territories. The makeover cost taxpayers at least \$845,000, and included a 10-page brief on the design commissioned by Canadian Heritage from a (mysterious) retired geography professor. [CBCNews | Politics](#)

Everyone a winner with Williams Lake Band victory, says Chief: The Supreme Court of Canada's reinstatement of a tribunal ruling that the Williams Lake Indian Band is owed federal government compensation for the theft of its village 150 years ago is "very good news" for everyone, says the band's chief. "All Canadians should be applauding this decision because it was a wrong against Indigenous people that's finally been acknowledged," said Chief Ann Louie. "And it should move us toward reconciliation and building a strong future together." While negotiations on compensation for the band have yet to begin, Louie says it will be seeking \$150 million, the maximum reimbursement allowed under the federal Specific Land Claims Tribunal. But this decision means more than upholding the rule of law in Canada by recognizing injustice against one First Nations band, says UBC anthropology professor Charles Menzies. He said it sets a precedent for future specific land claims across the country, especially in locations where colonial cities and towns were established. [The Tyee](#)

Universities use secret shoppers to make sure outsourced services meet standards: In the competitive world of college admissions, first impressions are crucial. But if your institution outsources its communications with prospective students to a third-party vendor, how would you know if that vendor is pulling its weight? What if inquiries from qualified candidates went unanswered? One solution, employed by an increasing number of both traditional and online-only institutions, is secret shopping. Secret shopping is a common tactic in the retail and hospitality businesses. Secret shoppers are employed to go into a business and act like a regular customer, perhaps with a particular scenario to test. Unbeknownst to staff, that shopper carefully records details about their experience, which will be fed back to the company's management. Increasingly, institutions want to use secret shops not only to look at their own services, but for their vendors. [Inside Higher Ed](#)

Some Not So "Geographical" News



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