



**News Digest of the Canadian Association of Geographers  
No. 477, February 14, 2018**

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**Carleton U's Tracey Lauriault looks at the controversy around Sidewalk Toronto's waterfront proposals:** Sidewalk Toronto's high-tech and futuristic waterfront proposals for the city of Toronto are mired in controversy, even though Canadian cities have relied upon state-of-the-art technology and artificial intelligence for quite some time. Indeed, we have within our reach the ability to create urban AI that can both serve its citizens while also benefiting the private sector. The proposals for Toronto's east-end waterfront, on the other hand, are an example of a proposed smart city system that has many wondering whether it will favour the values of the project's developers and proponents – government agency Waterfront Toronto and Alphabet's Sidewalk Labs, a Google company – rather than the interests of residents and the public. The project has been controversial for many reasons, largely because of an opaque approval process (the full contract has yet to be made public), and critical questions it poses around data collection and uses. "With respect to the Quayside project in particular, the scope, scale and implications of data collection and use are still unclear," the office of Toronto's deputy city manager said in a recent report. A year-long public consultation process has just begun. While Sidewalk Labs successfully responded to Waterfront Toronto's call for proposals, the procurement process did not include measures to mitigate the possible negative consequences of a private-sector AI smart city. The framework agreement between Waterfront Toronto and Sidewalk labs was not shared with city staff or other levels of government before the announcement of the partnership. That's not terribly surprising given the focus is on efficiency, innovation and technology. There's also scant municipal, provincial and federal policies, laws and regulations to govern and guide the deployment of these types of urban AI projects. [Policy Options](#)

**U Victoria's undergraduate Trilby Buck develops advanced GIS WebApp mapping project for longboarding locations in Victoria:** All too often longboarders are involved in serious accidents at higher rates than skateboarding. To decrease risk of injury and increase accessibility to the sport we need a way to make shared vehicle space safer. I rode a bit in high school but felt intimidated once I came to Victoria because I didn't know where I could go with my limited skills to learn and improve safely. So I decided to use my final project in advanced topics in GIS to provide information in an accessible way to people like myself. here's already a mobile app out there that kind of does this. It's called Longboard Mapp and it requires users to record routes, which others can then search based on difficulty level and type of riding. This is a really cool application, unfortunately it just doesn't have much data outside of America. I think there are maybe two runs users have made for Victoria, BC. What I decided to do was go about the problem from the other direction: find the locations for the user and provide them in an Esri Web app. [Esri Canada](#)

**U Waterloo's Daniel Scott reveals that while global warming is a threat to the Winter Games, it is worse for Paralympics:** Climate change is threatening the viability of both the Olympic Winter Games and the Paralympic Winter Games. The Paralympics, co-located with the Olympic Winter Games since 1992, but traditionally held closer to spring, is particularly vulnerable to a warming climate. "The traditional scheduling of the Paralympic Winter Games, approximately a month after the Olympic Winter Games, poses additional climate challenges as temperatures are warmer and the probability of rain instead of snowfall increases in most of the host locations," said Daniel Scott a professor of geography and environmental management at Waterloo. "The world of winter sports is changing as the global climate continues to warm and elite winter athletes are witnessing the impacts of climate change as fewer and fewer places will be able to host the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games as global warming accelerates." If greenhouse gas emission reduction pledges to the Paris Climate Agreement are successfully achieved, only 10 of the 21 sites that have previously hosted the Winter Olympics could still host the Winter Olympic Games and Paralympic Games by the middle of the century. If greenhouse gas emissions continue along current trends, the number of locations with a reliable climate for the Paralympics drops to only 8 by mid-century. [U Waterloo Environment](#)

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**U Victoria's Jutta Gutberlet** to receive the 2017 [Provost's Community Engaged Scholar award](#). This award reflects the high level of research quality and community engagement demonstrated by Jutta and her research group.

**McGill U's Sarah Turner** has been appointed as an editor of *Geoforum*. *Geoforum* is an interdisciplinary journal publishing research and commentary in human geography and related fields. It is global in outlook and integrative in approach. The broad focus of the journal is the organisation of economic, political, social and environmental systems through space and over time.

**U Victoria's Reuben Rose-Redwood** sat down with Calvin Toon of [@CHEK\\_NEWS](#) to talk about the politics of street naming in Victoria. This is happening amidst a movement in Victoria to rename Trutch Street, which is named after Sir Joseph Trutch. Trutch was B.C.'s first lieutenant-governor and came to the province during the gold rush. According to Rose-Redwood, he was an extreme racist, even for his time, and was responsible for significantly shrinking land reserves for Indigenous peoples while in power. [Watch at CHEK|News](#)

**Carleton U announces Charles Nixon Travel Bursary:** Thanks to a donation from alumnus Charles Nixon, Carleton U Geography and Environmental Studies undergraduate students enrolled in human geography and environmental studies are eligible for a bursary to assist in defraying the costs of academically related travel. [Carleton Geography and Environmental Studies](#)

**Guelph U doctoral student Amberley Ruetz** featured in Agri-food incubator story in *GuelphToday*: A group of University of Guelph grad students hope to bring to market a nutritious and cost-effective product for school lunch programs that also addresses a common problem farmers face when some of their fruits and vegetables may not be able to come to market. The idea was sparked by Amberley Ruetz who was working with Ontario's Student Nutrition Program. "In Ontario, schools are only funded about 15 cents per healthy snack. Imagine. What can you serve kids for 15 cents?" said Ruetz. The group identified another problem, that many fruits and vegetables are wasted when they are the wrong size or not attractive enough to come to market. [GuelphToday](#)

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



Chui-Ling Tam. 2018. [Notes on a caribou hearing: Spatial marginalization through participatory democracy in western Nunavut](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI:10.1111/cag.12443

Public hearings, as a communication tool for community engagement, uphold the processes and assumptions of deliberative participation, but the power relations entwined in participation space are often unremarked. The spatiality of participation can serve to marginalize those publics most affected by environmental policy, such as remote communities reliant on subsistence harvesting. Spatial marginalization was evident when the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board invited Hunters and Trappers Organizations from four Kitikmeot communities to caribou hearings in June 2016 to discuss a proposed total allowable harvest. The hearings were held in Cambridge Bay, the administrative centre of the Kitikmeot region, a hamlet in western Nunavut singular in its economic growth and population diversity. In situ observation during the hearings coupled with a content analysis of hearing transcripts and interviews with attendees suggest that decisions on participation space affect access materially because of who can be there in place to participate, and socially because of the place characteristics of participation. Participants can also be constrained by being out of place, cleaved from the affective support of their communities. At the Nunavut caribou hearings, spatial marginalization emerged as a dark side to participatory democracy. Recognizing this marginalization is a condition for overcoming it.

Francis Harvey. 2018. [Critical GIS: Distinguishing critical theory from critical thinking](#). The Canadian Geographer / Le Géographe canadien. DOI: 10.1111/cag.12440

This viewpoint offers a perspective on how critical GIS and critical GIScience can develop and go further in times of widespread concern and unease around the world. The basis for this is the distinction between critical theory and critical thinking. Revisiting this difference, especially in the many hybrids involving theories and applications with geographic information technologies, is important for thinking and reflecting on broader issues and assuring the integrity of our work.

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### Recent Theses and Dissertations

Douglas Schindler. 2018. [Influence of disturbance and potential predator effects on the persistence of boreal woodland caribou \(\*Rangifer tarandus caribou\*\) in Manitoba](#). PhD dissertation. Department of Environment and Geography, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Supervisor: David Walker.

Cheryl Veronica Sobie. 2018. [Women's right to food in the city: Indigenous single mothers confronting unjust foodscapes, poverty, and racism in Winnipeg](#). MA thesis. Department of Environment and Geography, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba. Supervisor: Jeffrey Masuda.

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## Hot Papers by Canadian Geographers

Geoffrey A. Battista and Kevin Manaugh. 2018. [Stores and mores: Toward socializing walkability](#). *Journal of Transport Geography* 67:53–60.

Zvi Drezner and Taly Dawn Drezner. 2018. [The alpha male genetic algorithm](#). *IMA Journal of Management Mathematics*. doi.org/10.1093/imaman/dpy002

Tracey Lauriault. 2018. [The controversy around Sidewalk Toronto's waterfront proposals is raising important questions around the values embedded in our urban AI systems](#). *Policy Options*.

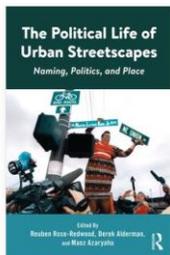
Clare J.A. Mitchell and Meghan Shannon. 2018. [Exploring cultural heritage tourism in rural Newfoundland through the lens of the evolutionary economic geographer](#). *Journal of Rural Studies* 59:21–34.

W.L. Quinton, A.A. Berg, O. Carpino, R.F. Connon, J.R. Craig, E. Devoie and E. Johnson, E. 2018. [Toward understanding the trajectory of hydrological change in the southern Taiga Plains, northeastern British Columbia and southwestern Northwest Territories](#). In: *Geoscience BC Summary of Activities 2017: Energy, Geoscience BC, Report 2018-4:77–86*.

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## New Book

Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman and Maoz Azaryahu. 2018. [The Political Life of Urban Streetscapes. Naming, Politics, and Place](#). Routledge. 334 pages



Streetscapes are part of the taken-for-granted spaces of everyday urban life, yet they are also contested arenas in which struggles over identity, memory, and place shape the social production of urban space. This book examines the role that street naming has played in the political life of urban streetscapes in both historical and contemporary cities. The renaming of streets and remaking of urban commemorative landscapes have long been key strategies that different political regimes have employed to legitimize spatial assertions of sovereign authority, ideological hegemony, and symbolic power. Over the past few decades, a rich body of critical scholarship has explored the politics of urban toponymy, and the present collection brings together the works of geographers, anthropologists, historians, linguists, planners, and political scientists to examine the power of street naming as an urban place-making practice. Covering a wide range of case studies from cities in Europe, North America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Asia, the contributions to this volume illustrate how the naming of streets has been instrumental to the reshaping of urban spatial imaginaries and the cultural politics of place.

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## Other “Geographical” News

**Consuming Canada: How fashion firms leverage the landscape to create and communicate brand identities, distinction and values:** An examination of how a range of Canadian fashion firms leverage the landscape to create and communicate brand identities, distinction and values. It demonstrates how firms of different sizes and scales construct, harness, or reimagine landscapes and/or popular stereotypes to connect with Canadian identities and consumers. [Brydges and Hracs 2018](#)

**How to be an academic without working 60 hours a week:** It clearly hit a nerve on academic Twitter. Many argued that they didn’t work these hours, and critically, they would never want to push this idea on junior colleagues. Reading all the responses on Twitter was genuinely eye-opening: I just had no idea that so many successful academics clock in at 40-45 hours a week. [The Guardian](#)

**Dry campus, my ass: an autoethnography of U.S. academic drinking culture:** The degree to which alcohol is embedded within academic professionalization is a problem. We are all pressured in ways both subtle and flagrant into accepting, and reproducing, an occupational culture of alcohol use (and abuse) that is indirect, elusive, nearly invisible. Invisible, that is, to those who partake. We drinkers are the ruling class, imposing our values and expectations and worldviews so that they become the cultural norm. Our careers and campuses are steeped within an ideology of alcohol. To non-drinkers, those for whom the spaces of departmental happy hours and conference after parties are not designed, these unwritten rules and guidelines are far from invisible. They spring sharply into focus. They are explicit. They say, incredulously: You’re not getting a drink? [Grad Food Studies 2017](#)

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## Some Not So “Geographical” News



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GeogNews Archives: <http://www.geog.uvic.ca/dept/cag/geognews/geognews.html>  
[@CanGeographers Weekly](#): <https://paper.li/CanGeographers/1394987315>

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