



Effecting Policy in Resource Management

by Patricia Fitzpatrick

One of the strengths of the discipline of Geography, and the research we do in the department is that in considering how society manages its resources, both human and physical, to have the opportunity to influence what is happening the real world. This is how I come to approach “community” – the theme of this issue.

Over the past several years, I and Alan P. Diduck, from Environmental Studies & Sciences, have been fortunate to partner with community organizations to participate in several different environmental assessments. We have provided an independent analysis of the role of adaptive management in monitoring and follow-up program of different proposed projects, including the Bipole III Transmission Project, the Keeyask Generation Project, and most recently the Enbridge Line 3 Replacement Project for community

organizations. As part of that analysis, we prepared reports for submission as evidence to an arms-length commission. We then testified in front of the commission – subject to cross-examination by the commission, the proponent, other intervenors and the public. The community organization – like the commission – used our independent reports to take a position as to whether the projects should proceed.

At the provincial level, this work has been very successful. Our reports were quoted extensively in the commission documents, and there were several recommendations related to our evidence. The recommendations were then built into the final license issued by the Province of Manitoba. In this way, it has been a great opportunity to apply scholarly research to real-world examples, and, hopefully, contribute to better projects in future!

This issue of **GeoMatters** is built around the theme of community, both in research and in education. The faculty, staff and students in Geography are involved in community projects at many levels. In this issue, you will see how Geography faculty are involved in engaging the public using film and citizen-science websites that both informs and involves people in communities. It endeavours to show our students what research we do for the community and make opportunities for students to engage in service learning as part of their education experience. Research and education projects can also lead to effective change in policy, directly or indirectly, which impacts provincial or national communities. The best outcome of these projects is the legacy continues as we observe our students actively engaged with their communities, both on-campus and off-campus.

If you have any suggestions for future newsletter articles, please feel free to contact us at: geography@uwinnipeg.ca

Editors: Joni Storie & Weldon Hiebert

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Dr. Fitzpatrick overlooking the city of Yellowknife, N.W.T. (Photo: Marie Adams)



THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY

<http://geography.uwinnipeg.ca>

Geographers in a Cemetery

by Chris Storie and Brad Russell

What do seventeen students, five faculty and staff and a cemetery have in common? Geography! During the 2014 offering of the colloquially title Churchill Field Course (GEOG 4801), we undertook the first service learning project based on a request from community leaders. This project's purpose was to produce a map and database of the Churchill Community Cemetery. When we brought this idea to the students, they unanimously agreed that it should be done and over the course of almost 4 hours, five teams of students mapped, photographed and catalog each burial site within the cemetery (Figure 1). The data was then compiled over the proceeding months by Brad Russell, our map librarian, into the coherent database that it is today.



Figure 1: Dan and Kate mapping a burial site. (Photo: C. Storie)

In August 2015, Chris and Joni (Storie) returned to Churchill. Part of their time in Churchill was spent mapping the outlying burial sites in and around the town (Figure 2 and Figure 3) for inclusion into the database. In addition, Joni and Chris, and a small group of people, headed over to the old town site to map the original two cemeteries that exist on the other side of the Churchill River. Given



Figure 2: Additional Burial Site (on La Vérendrye Ave down from primary cemetery). (Photo: C. Storie)



Figure 3: Additional burial site (near airport). (Photo: C. Storie)

these have been largely left to Mother Nature for almost 70 years, we were unsuccessful in finding them our first time. We have vowed to return and try again!

During our final evening in Churchill, Chris gave an open presentation on the mapping project at the Overpass to over 40 people from the community. The question and answer period was designed to allow for input from community members but to also better understand how the community would like the final product delivered. Overall the project was incredibly well received and many of the community members expressed their gratitude, said the product went above and beyond expectations, and conveyed how important it is to them and their families.

This project has underscored to all those involved the mutual benefits to service learning and community engagement. Projects such as this go beyond the learning outcomes associated with a particular course and extend well into the community. We look forward to engaging the community when we return in the future.

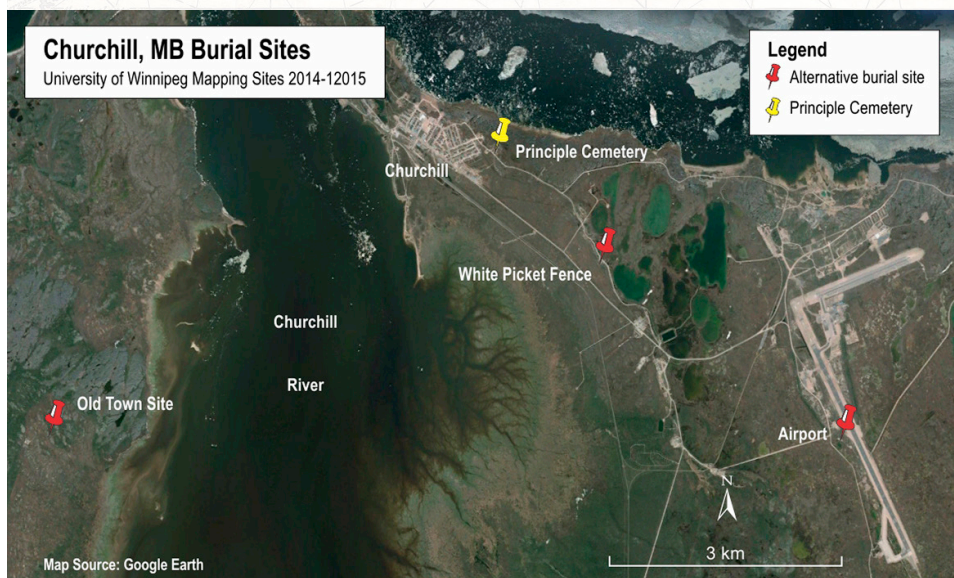


Figure 4: Context map. (Source: Google Earth)

Winter Walking: Evaluating Human Perception and Climatic Factors to Enhance Pedestrian Safety

by Gina Sylvestre and Nora Casson

In most winter cities, municipal governments and a car-centric public are focused on the inadequate snow clearing of streets. However, with the promotion of walkability, it has become imperative to understand both the experience and causes of poor walking conditions. During the winter of 2015-2016, pedestrians will have the opportunity to contribute to a new website that is gathering information about winter walking conditions throughout Winnipeg. The Winnipeg Winter Walking Condition Website is an innovative Human-Physical Geography partnership of departmental faculty members Gina Sylvestre and Nora Casson.

Winter walkers are encouraged to participate in providing information about walking surfaces that they experience. The website will collect information that includes a rating scale of level of walking difficulty, descriptions of snow clearing, ice and snow conditions that create barriers to walking, as well as basic information about a walker's physical ability and frequency

of winter walking. Using this innovative "citizen science" data collection strategy will allow us to collect a large dataset across the city, while engaging Winnipeggers in the issue of winter walkability.

The goal of the study is to analyze the association of winter walking assessments with climatic data. Understanding relationships between winter walking conditions and weather conditions will help policy makers decide how and when to deploy limited snow clearing resources. It is anticipated that this research will lead to an improved understanding about snow and ice conditions that create hazards for winter walkers. Ultimately, the researchers hope to contribute to an increased awareness by pedestrians of dangerous walking conditions, as well as improved municipal practices and policies on snow clearing of winter walkways.

Watch for the website link on the Geography website, facebook and twitter pages in the near future.

Icelandic Rescue: Canadian Style

by Weldon Hiebert

Prior to the start of the Fall Term, a group of geographers embarked on a tour of Iceland to experience the fascinating geology of the island and how the inhabitants have managed to cope with living on a volcanically active landscape. Each day was a new adventure exploring plate boundaries, waterfalls, geyser fields, cinder cones and lava tubes. Highlights of the trip included a walk on a glacier and a morning of whale watching.

The rugged landscape of Iceland as well as its harsh climate makes road travel a bit of a challenge. Iceland's main highway (Ring Road) is comprised of rough pavement with narrow lanes and no shoulders, not one that Canadians would expect for a national highway system. Secondary roads are even worse with loose gravel, plenty of pot holes and again, no shoulders.

While travelling along a secondary road, we came across a car which ended up partially off the road. Of course we immediately pulled over and offered our assistance to the person desperately trying to free her car from the soft volcanic "sand" which was surprisingly similar to snow; and snow-like conditions are a situation very familiar to Canadians. Everyone chipped in and after fifteen minutes of rocking and pushing we were able to free the car from the ditch. The owner of the car was overwhelmed to tears by the generosity and help from a handful of intrepid geographers.

The Canadian prairie is a harsh environment where a sense of community is important and helping strangers overcome adversity comes as second nature. To take this community spirit and apply it overseas is, well, a Winnipeg thing!



A participant of Gina's *Walking on Ice* video. (Photo: Hillary Beattie)



Geographers ponder on how to get this car unstuck. (Photo: Ina Vincent)

BC Communities/Climate Change

by Ian Mauro

Earlier this summer, I was standing at the base of the “Mosquito” totem pole, at an old indigenous village site along the coast of Haida Gwaii. Despite being in a coastal forest full of fresh air, the scene left me breathless. It was my last day on a “listening tour” of British Columbia with David Suzuki. Over the previous two weeks, we had been to 12 different coastal communities, many in First Nation territory, engaging people in conversation, and screening a draft of my latest film on climate change and oceans in British Columbia. The film, shot the previous year, focuses on local people’s first-hand experience and observations of climate change in the region. It resonated with our audiences, especially given the newsworthy water shortages, droughts, forest fires, ocean warming and acidification recently taking place along the Pacific coast. Indeed, citizens increasingly see global climate change at the local level, and my work captures and communicates these perspectives using video.

As a filmmaker, touring an environmental documentary with David Suzuki is an hon-



our, especially given he is now in his 80th year and is an elder in his own right. And, while David has a knack for pulling in and motivating a crowd, we were equally inspired by the knowledge and resolve of communities we met to address the complex challenges and opportunities that await. Despite our uncertain future, celebrating partnerships that encourage sustainable communities, cultures and ecosystems is important, as it gets us thinking creatively and collaboratively about solutions. With this in mind, I’m working on a final cut, incorporating the feedback from the tour, and look forward to releasing the full documentary soon. After leaving the totem pole, our Haida friends took us out to check their Dungeness crab traps, and the moonlit feast that followed showed the richness and connection between the ocean and the people that make it their home. What a way to end the tour!

Haida totem pole photo courtesy of Ian Mauro.



Ian Mauro and David Suzuki on tour along the B.C. coast. (Photo: Len Peterson)

GESA and the Community

by Weldon Hiebert

The Geography and Environmental Studies & Sciences Students Association (GESA) has been active in the University community for many years. GESA works hard to involve students in activities outside the classroom and create awareness about events happening at the University and around Winnipeg related to their field of study.

One of GESA’s crowning glories is the GESA Eco-Grant. The grant is offered to students of the University of Winnipeg and Collegiate, faculty members, staff or community member (anyone with an affiliation to the University of Winnipeg) that wish to submit a project proposal on how to make the University campus more sustainable. Preference for a winning proposal is given to campus based projects that will have the largest impact on our campus’s sustainability. The grant is offered annually and has a value of \$2000.

GESA hosts various fundraisers to help fund the Eco-Grant. Just recently they held their third annual Beer Night at Garbonzo’s. The event was a huge success as patrons imbibed in “unlimited” samples of local and national beer brands. In March GESA hosts their ever popular Trivia Night. Information on these and other GESA events can be found on their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/gesastudents>.



GESA Executive

Back row (from left): Matthew Nguyen, Kimberly Thomson, Janelle Laing

Front row (from left): Shawna Karlowsky, Jeremy Leathers, Nadine Kanik, Jordan Poitras

Grey Ghettos: Seniors' Experience of Inclusion and Exclusion in Winnipeg's North End

by Gina Sylvestre

Winnipeg's North End, distinguished by social and ecological polarization, has had a particular impact on older adults who have been excluded from everyday life; specifically, inner city communities have been compromised due to those focused on the suburban ideal. The question raised in this research is the potential of inclusive and sustainable spaces for aging well in environments that have greater risk for Winnipeg seniors.

In the past three years, I have been exploring neighbourhoods in the North End to gain insight about the meaning of aging in communities typically characterized by poverty. Crucial to the study is participatory action research that seeks on-going community input to ensure respectful consultations and reciprocal dialogue regarding the goals and findings of the study. Such discourse has allowed me to forge partnerships with organizations such as the Point Douglas Seniors Coalition and the North End Seniors Wellness Program.

An essential feature of this research approach is to capture the rich diversity of the North End. Impressions of physical urban decay have been offset by a multi-layered landscape of ethnic heritage and social cohesion. I am continuing to learn from the life narratives of many seniors living in senior housing complexes such as the Polish Manor, KeKiNan Centre and St. Mary The Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Millennium Villa. I am also looking forward to participating in the Kookum and Mooshum weekly drop-in group for grandmothers and grandfathers.

The ultimate outcome of the study, *Grey Ghettos: Exploring Inclusion and Exclusion in Winnipeg's North End*, is the advancement of a theoretical framework identifying the diverse meanings of both vulnerability and inclusion for populations that are ageing. The purpose of this framework will ultimately inform policy development that addresses exclusionary processes while supporting the vision of inclusive com-

munities based on engagement, trust and reciprocity.



Gina with a study participant at St. Mary The Protectress Ukrainian Orthodox Millennium Villa. (Photo: Nora Cristall)

City Studio

by Marc Vachon

A University of Winnipeg delegation attended the Vancouver City Studio 'Art in the Cities' three day seminar, in May 2015, to discuss and explore the City Studio model. The University of Winnipeg delegation consisted of Dr. Jino Distasio (VP. Research and Innovation), Dr. Vachon (Faculty member and Chair of the Department of Geography), Kevin Settee (UWSA vice-president External Affairs) and Michael A. Jack (Chief Operating Officer of the City of Winnipeg). The seminar also had delegation from at least 6 other universities across Canada.

Vancouver City Studio is an innovation hub whereas City hall staff, university students and community members co-create, design and launch various urban projects. As such, the City Studio also involves University faculty and courses in collaboration with City Hall which aims to create innovative projects and or sustainable solutions to urban issues.

Overall it was very productive for all the University delegates who attended the 'Art in the Cities' seminar. While each city has different challenges, the idea of collaborating with City Hall in developing innovative projects based on

students and community members was received enthusiastically by all the delegations. The University of Winnipeg delegation recognized the potential of working with these various stakeholders and we are in the process of exploring the possibility of creating a City Studio in Winnipeg.

