Letter from the Chair

Greetings from Syracuse! The semester has ended, it’s warm in Syracuse, and campus is quiet. Saying good-bye to graduating students is bittersweet, but soon we will welcome new graduate and undergraduate students. Between now and then, all of us will try to catch our breath, catch up on projects, and gear up for next year.

This is my first column as chair. In July 2014, Tod Rutherford completed six years as chair, hopping across the pond to teach in SUAbroad’s Florence program and work on his research in Italy. Sitting in the chair’s office in mid-January, I was jealous!

This year was busy. In Fall 2014, we hosted great speakers, the Nature-Society conference, a symposium on citizenship with the Anthropology Department, Career Night, GeoFest, a fieldtrip with Queen’s University, and Geography Awareness Week. We also launched our new website – geocuse.syr.edu – created by our seniors to introduce other undergraduates and high schoolers to geography. We are so proud of their work on this website, which has caught the attention of geography departments across the country.

In Spring 2015, we had more excellent speakers, hosted GIS workshops, and sent our best and brightest (including undergraduates!) to the Chicago AAG Meetings. In April, we held our 3rd annual Donald Meinig Undergraduate Lecture, given this year by Prof. Sallie Marston from the University of Arizona. This event celebrates both Don Meinig’s service to our department and the accomplishments of our graduating seniors. Inside the newsletter, you’ll find excerpts of an interview conducted by our students with Sallie. A special thanks to those of you who helped make this lecture possible.

This year welcomed Jane Read as new Undergraduate Director and was the final year of Susan Millar’s six-year term as Graduate Director. We are immensely grateful for Susan’s work. This is a challenging time to be a graduate student, and Susan was an incredible advocate and mentor for our students. As Susan steps down, Tom Perreault is stepping up. Our graduate program continues to be in good hands!

Finally, let me brag about folks in our department. This year, faculty members were awarded fellowships from Fulbright (Koch), the Rachel Carson Center (Wilson), the National Science Foundation (Monmonier), the National Endowment for the Humanities (Read), and the Falk School (J. Robinson), just to name a few. Two of our faculty members now chair AAG specialty groups. Multiple graduate students won awards from AAG specialty groups, and from the National Science Foundation. Jesse Quinn was named an Outstanding Teaching Assistant by the Graduate School. The honors thesis of Rose Tardiff, a Geography senior, won the top prize in the social sciences. I could go on and on!

This newsletter spotlights students, past and present. We would love to hear from you as well. Drop me an email (jwinders@maxwell.syr.edu), or post on our Facebook page. Of course, we still love real mail, so letters are welcome, too. We look forward to next year and hope to see you soon.

Jamie Winders
@SUGeographer

Jamie Winders and John Western enjoy the geocuse.syr.edu launch.
Excerpts from an Interview with Prof. Sallie Marston, conducted by Geography Seniors, Kerry Wolfe and Shaye Weldon, April 2015

Sallie Marston (SM) is Professor of Geography at the University of Arizona and was chosen by our graduating seniors to give the 2015 Don Meinig Undergraduate Lecture. For our students, Prof. Marston’s Human Geography: Places and Regions in Global Context, written with Paul Knox, was a first introduction to geography.

KW: When did you realize you wanted to become a geographer?

SM: In college... I went to Clark as an undergrad... [There] you had access to teachers. You could work on other people’s research projects. I had started off as a psychology major, and I finished with a double major in geography and psychology...

KW: So what made you want to continue, to take the path you’ve taken?

SM: The teachers were great. I liked the other students. Clark is a school that’s really engaged in the community. A lot of the faculty members there were, I guess, radical... I didn’t think of it that way so much at the time but... this is in the 70s, so we’re in the Vietnam era, there’s a lot of poverty... The people in that department seemed engaged with their community in a way that I wanted to be.... The first class that I took and really got interested in geography was a course taught by Martyn Bowden... on the culture of cities, which I loved. The next class I took was by Dick Peet, and it was the geography of American poverty, which just kind of blew my mind... People were offering really compelling classes that seemed relevant, and it hadn’t seemed like that in high school at all.

KW: As a professor, how do you now instill those values that got you interested in geography onto your students?

SM: ...I have two classes that I think are really representative of that question. The first class that I developed is cultural geography... I got to a point about 10 years ago where I thought, “You know what, students aren’t doing the reading. And it doesn’t matter what strategies I use to try to enjoin them to do that; they aren’t reading it.” So I’m going to either quit doing this kind of work or see if there’s some way I can change that about them. I talked to a bunch of students who had taken the class, and they said, “Well, you know, students our age are much more visual learners”... I developed a new class where I teach political economy... – reserve army of labor, capital and class, value vs. price – by watching The Wire, a television show about the drug economy of Baltimore. It’s got race, gender, class, disinvestment, gentrification – everything in it. I changed my way of teaching so that the students watched two episodes every class, and then they read a little tiny piece to go with it... It was a major transformation in the way I taught social justice in the city, the emergence of a particular economy when the other economy couldn’t accommodate workers involved in shipping, manufacturing, and all that stuff that got exported. It’s an amazing experience. The students don’t mind watching two hours of television every night, but they watch it according to a particular set of questions/concepts that I set for them. Everybody in the room is responsible for one concept through the whole semester... People started watching the show in a way that they hadn’t watched it before... I learned a lot from them. They would see subtleties in masculinity and things that I didn’t see because I don’t have that skill at visual learning.

The second class I teach is a community and school gardening internship... We teach basic gardening skills – composting, irrigation, how to grow indigenous crops in the desert, sustainable food systems. We also do how to manage children, how to develop lesson plans that are oriented around ecological learning, sustainability, indigenous knowledge, etc. Then we have a third component of the curriculum that is about white privilege, race, critical pedagogy, changing communities through community activism... We put 110 to 120 students every year out into the community... We intake students with long interviews where we find out what their interests are... These are undergraduates and (continued on next page)
Sallie Marston interview, continued

graduates, and now we work with high school students to take the class for college credit... There are all kinds of interesting ways that students, from art to science, can participate and use their skills...

SW: Does the food always go into the community, or is up to the class to decide how they work with the food, where it goes?

SM: It’s different for different schools... Our hub school, where we do all our teacher training, has been instrumental in going to the State and getting the health laws changed so that the kids can eat the food in their cafeteria. Every few months, they do a big harvest, and then they have a big day where they eat kale, lettuce, beans, beets, melons, whatever they’re growing... They also do a farmer’s market once a week... I didn’t institute any of this stuff. Our students did it all in collaboration with the teachers and the counselor at this school... These kids... look every week at [the local grocer] Food City... and they put their prices for organic foods at the same price as those foods. They also then discount food for their own families because they bring in the cost of their labor, and we have them calculate the value of their labor as experienced laborers... So it’s a pretty all-encompassing program. We don’t expect for them to learn to be farmers – they might want to be that, organic and alternative farm kind of stuff. We expect them to be whatever they want to be, but we would really like for them to know that if they want to go to college, they can, because most of them are destined to drop out of school at 16 or 17. So it’s pretty cool. For our students who work in community and school gardens, it’s transformative. They’ll say, “I learned so much more than I taught. I learned so much about myself. I learned that I don’t have to be afraid to go into these neighborhoods, that there are really interesting and important people who live there.” And they learn to listen, to go into places and not say, “This is what you should do,” but rather, “how can we help?”...

KW: Do they realize they’re learning geography?

SM: That’s a good question. I bet they don’t because a lot of these interns aren’t geographers... The class is cross-listed in 9 departments... We do talk about geography all the time in the class, and we do get converts, but I think most of them don’t really appreciate that.

KW: It also speaks to the fact that geography is a multi-disciplinary discipline. In senior seminar, we talked about how it incorporates history, politics, economics. It’s the only discipline I can think of that touches on everything.
Sallie Marston interview, continued
(at least at the undergraduate level, it should be about creating a particular kind of person and then you go on for advanced training) I think that we have to be really creative in thinking about the kinds of opportunities that we are creating... I don't think you wait until the end of your undergraduate career to say, now what I am going to do? You should already be doing whatever it is that you're going to be doing. You can do it in the community, in internships, in all kinds of ways. For a satisfying life (not just a successful career), you want to think about what makes you happy in those ways and... try to get away from disciplinary boxes because I think we're in a period where those disciplines are going to go away... Maybe this is a fad, I'm not sure, but something's going on out there...

KW: As an academic, how would you want to communicate the values of geography so those don't get passed up or shoved away?

SM: I think it's a question of always recognizing where ideas come from. We never should lose sight of the sources of who we are. It's important for us in the 21st century to know the classical origins of our discipline, for example. So going all the way to the classical geographers and looking at how they saw the world... It doesn't necessarily have to be that people continue that trajectory into the 22nd century but that they understand that knowledge is always in production, that it does have antecedents that are both classical but also popular, and that some of the popular antecedents, they're hard to get at... I especially think it's relevant when you think about problem-solving... For example, Jerry Brown, the governor of California, announced that the entire state was going on rationing, both residential and commercial, so everybody is going to ration their water now... He goes to this meadow up in the foothills of the Sierras, and he says, this meadow should have five feet of snowpack in it, and it's just grass. There's no snow at all in this meadow. So how do you think about a problem without thinking about all the ways that problem is entraining humans, animals, the atmosphere, the hydrologic cycle, all those things? Geography, as a holistic discipline, allows you to do that. If we think about the history of geographic thought, it started with the ancients. There was philosophy (how do we think about the world), mathematics (how do we come to a measurement of that world), and geography (this is the world, and this is who we are in that world) – that's all there was. For me, geography is the obvious place to go back because it doesn't recognize these divisions and it does have a framework for thinking about complex problems...

Having a broad perspective on problems is so much more enabling than having a very narrow view where you can only see the core but not all the ways that problem radiates out into all these other systems.

The SU Geography Department thanks Sallie, and our students, for this interview.

Undergraduate News

The Geography Undergraduate Program had an energetic and exciting year. The number of geography majors and minors is slowly increasing, and the Environment and Society minor is still proving popular. We are so grateful to our majors for their enthusiasm. Our students volunteered to talk to introductory classes and attend tables for Geography Awareness Week, GIS Day, and spring receptions for incoming students and their families. My (Jane Read) first year as Director of Undergraduate Studies was incredibly rewarding, albeit equally as busy.

In the fall, geography undergraduates packed the room for our annual Career Night to hear from current and former students on how geography has helped them in their careers. We were thrilled to have Phil Curtis (Senior Researcher at The Sustainability Consortium, Arkansas), Risa Hiser (Program Associate for The Trust for Public Land, Boston), Sarah Walton (Deputy Director of Operations, Syracuse Northeast Community Center), and Mike Zgoda (Deputy Director for Private Sector Partnerships, Office of the Director of National Intelligence) on our alumni panel. We also heard from two current graduate students, Emily Mitchell-Eaton and Patrick Oberle, as well as representatives from Career Services and The Center for Fellowship and Scholarship Advising. Several of our alumni also participated in the Department's highly successful Maxwell 90th event, which was aimed at undergraduate students in the social sciences. Our undergraduates found both events really helpful in thinking through strategies for enhancing their career prospects.

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Geography Club members shared enthusiasm and goodies during Geography Awareness Week.
Undergraduate News, continued

In the spring, our main event was the 3rd annual Donald Meinig Undergraduate Lecture and dinner for graduating seniors. This year’s speaker, Prof. Sallie Marston, spoke on “Imagine the Impossible: Science, Art, Transversality and the Creation of Creative Subjects.” At the dinner, we celebrated the accomplishments of our graduating seniors, honoring those inducted into Gamma Theta Upsilon and those receiving department awards.

This year, our graduating seniors excelled in many and varied ways. Rose Tardiff was awarded a coveted National Geographic Internship and will spend this fall in Washington, DC, working in their Education Division. Under the supervision of Tom Perreault, Rose was also awarded distinction in geography and the prize for the top social science capstone project in the Renée Crown Honors Program. John Marino was awarded distinction in geography for his thesis, supervised by Anne Mosher. Adding to the list of honorees, two geography minors, Daniel Hopkins and Luke Rafferty, were named 2015 Remembrance Scholars, and Rachel Correll (geography minor), and Chiara Klein (ENS minor) were invited to join Phi Beta Kappa. In all, seventeen seniors graduated this year. Congratulations to all!

As the year came to a close, an enthusiastic group of students took the plunge and decided to make our informal Geography Club a recognized student organization – name to be decided. Stay tuned for news and activities of the club!

Geography Class of 2015

Andrew Barrows  
(GTU Honors)

Juliet Bonczkowski

Ashley Carter  
(Preston E. James Award, GTU Honors)

Collin Chambers  
(George B. Cressey Award, GTU Honors)

Ashley Clemente

Christine Edgeworth  
(Geography Faculty Award for Excellence)

Emma Edwards  
(George B. Cressey Award, GTU Honors)

Austin Harrison

Ly Ho  
(George B. Cressey Award, GTU Honors)

John Marino  
(Geography Faculty Award for Excellence, GTU Honors)

Tyler McDonald

Rose Tardiff  
(NCGE Outstanding Student, GTU Honors)

Joseph Venditti

Shaye Weldon  
(George B. Cressey Award)

Samuel Wittenstein

Kerry Wolfe  
(Preston E. James Award)

Zhirou Zhang  
(Preston E. James Award, GTU Honors)
What our geography undergrads do on campus when they're not in class:

Hamish Gibbs, Geography Sophomore: This semester I have become involved in the SU Ambulance, Syracuse University's 24-7 response to medical emergencies on campus. SU Ambulance has given me both training and experience as an ambulance driver and emergency medical dispatcher. I am currently preparing for my state examinations as a Basic EMT and look forward to returning to SU this fall to work with patients in the back of the ambulance. Despite sleepless weekend nights, SU Ambulance has been an extremely rewarding experience. I look forward to continuing working and training with the organization throughout my time at SU.

Logan Reidtma, Geography Senior: I am the photo editor at the Daily Orange, the independent student newspaper. As photo editor, I am in charge of everything that pertains to imagery. This includes assigning photographers to stories, researching ideas for stories, and making sure that every story has a photo to accompany it when published for both print and web. The job requires extraordinary amounts of organization. During production, work in house is Sunday through Thursday, and the time I get out of work can be as early as 10 p.m. or into the wee hours of the morning. It depends on if there is an event coverage that starts at night such as a sporting event or an important speaker. However, the loss of sleep is made up through the experience gained from being a head editor.

Rachel Carroll, Geography Senior: I have only been on the Dean’s Team for a short period of time, but I already love it! I did not know much about it prior to applying, but I was expecting us to interact and serve as resources to incoming students for any questions they may have. I really enjoy that my job on the Dean’s Team is to tell potential and incoming students all about the university and the College of Arts and Sciences. I love this school and am eager to pass on my great experiences and knowledge to new students.

Caley Wildenhout, Geography Senior: I joined Dean’s Team for two different reasons: 1) I absolutely love my geography major and want to share that love with incoming freshman and 2) I love mentoring and helping others find what they love as they survive their first year. Dean’s Team gives me the opportunity to do both of those! I get to woo new students to the geography major and I also get to work personally with a small group, mentoring and guiding them. I have loved the experience I have had so far.

From former geography students:

Phil Curtis, (B.A. Geography, 2010): SU Geography has helped my career in many ways, but none as much as simply teaching me that location matters. To me that is the fundamental idea that colors my understanding of the world, and it gives me a unique perspective that I apply every day. I work for an organization that helps companies address environmental and social issues within supply chains, and my background in geography helps me bring a new way of looking at problems and their potential solutions. Two products may be created in the exact same way, but the impacts can vary dramatically, depending on where that production takes place and where the raw materials originated. Water used to grow apples in upstate New York has a very different impact on people and the environment than if that same amount of water were used to grow apples in Central California. Most importantly, understanding the importance of location forces me to acknowledge that the world is complex and that problems rarely have simple, clean solutions. This means that flexibility is essential if a solution is to be applicable between regions and under varying circumstances.

Sarah Walton, (B.A. Geography, 2013): I have always been fascinated by the intersection of people and place. I just did not realize there was a field teaching that interest until my first SU geography class. To say I came upon geography fortuitously would be true, but the significance of multi-disciplinary thinking about global, local, spatial, and logical human issues is not as casual. Those intentional relationships have helped me build a career grounded in macro-level thinking, even here in Syracuse: seeing the big picture; understanding how small parts can be one whole; looking for opportunities for people and place to create an identity and thrive reciprocally. In my current role at the Syracuse Northeast Community Center, geography has helped to shape my understanding of not only our catchment area in a highly impoverished neighborhood but also my ability to think creatively and logically about issues facing the people in their environment. In small and large ways, whether through grant writing, program development, or neighborhood issues meetings, geography informs my thinking and approach to problem solving. To my career, geography is a strategic way of thinking that helps me understand broad issues and how my part plays a valuable role in a living, flourishing urban area.

Risa Hiser, (B.A. Geography, 2011): Detroit is poised to make history with the opportunity presented by vacant land. My task is to develop a tool to address the abundance of vacant land. The goal is to support the existing vision and base of services and to contribute positive social, environmental, and economical benefits. I work at the Trust for Public Land. We are developing a competition to identify strategies for large-scale open space transformation that are income generating and provide positive benefits to the City of Detroit and Detroiters. Understanding the components that accompany vacant land is crucial to framing the problem and solution. I greatly value my education in geography at SU. The exposure to different ideas, theories, and methodologies presented in courses on physical geography, race and space, public space and homelessness, and geographic information systems was exactly the training I needed. Geography courses did not teach me a formula to solve a specific problem but provided me a toolset to use when making decisions. Considering both the perspectives of the physical environment and cultural aspects of society has allowed me to work with planners, architects, engineers, government officials, environmental scientists, and residents to discuss all facets of a city- its needs, resources, and challenges - at varying scales to identify how to move forward collectively.
Another year, another crop of Syracuse graduate students. Before I mention some of the highlights, I’d like to acknowledge the great service, friendship, and contributions of Chris Chapman to our Graduate Program. Chris retired at the end of last summer - reluctantly. But after 15 years of driving through innumerable blizzards to be here, coupled with the prospect of a great job opportunity that didn’t require 45 miles of traffic and snow, the choice was easy! I am, however, thrilled to have the pleasure to work with Mary Collier, our new Graduate Coordinator. Many of you may have interacted with her already via e-mail or phone, and if so, I’m sure you will agree that she has successfully managed to fill Chris’s shoes and take off running. In other words, the Graduate Program continues to be in very capable hands.

Last year, we graduated no fewer than eight Ph.D.’s. This reduced the size of the graduate program, although this shrinkage is further exacerbated by the University decision to offer only one Fellowship per department. In the past, the awards were made on a purely competitive basis. Needless to say, we frequently swept up two or more, and in fact, that 2014 crop of Ph.D.’s contained no fewer than three Fellows. This year, we recognize the successful completion of six Master’s students, several of whom remain with us to pursue the doctoral degree.


Kristin Cutler (M.A.) (Wilson) “Pets in the City: Managing Surplus Dogs in Syracuse, NY” (Dec. 2014)


Patrick Oberle (M.A.) (Monmonier) “The Practice of Neogeography in Community-Based Organizations” (Dec. 2014)


Speaking of University decisions impacting our program…This semester, we were informed that Fellowship students were no longer going to be supported through the employee health plan as part of their compensation package. Rather, they are being required to buy into a new, specially designed policy that will cost them an extra $800 a year, plus require a co-insurance payment of 20% of the costs of any care. This plan was initially presented as a done deal that included Teaching and Research Assistants as well. However, after a vocal and uncompromising battle from the Graduate Student Organization, the university backed off. Nonetheless, it has created the contradiction whereby the university acknowledges a student’s academic excellence and potential by awarding a fellowship, at the same time that it penalizes them for being excellent. Stay tuned for updates, and as alumni, please feel free to let your feelings be known.

On a more positive note, I’d like to thank all of you who responded to the survey that Tiago Texeiras and I conducted last spring. I’m happy to report that several of the ideas, concerns, and suggestions voiced in your responses are being considered and implemented. This semester, we attempted a trial run of one-credit modules for teaching and professional development. John Western and I ran a teaching practicum, designed to give students an opportunity to have their classroom performance reviewed, to summarize teaching evaluations, and to incorporate these into a teaching portfolio. Matt Huber offered a module exploring the academic geography job market. This covered topics such as how to prepare a job application and negotiate a job interview. A key objective of the module was to determine just how healthy the job market for geographers really is - or not. Future plans for modules include regular teaching practica and units on pedagogy, grant writing, writing for academic, popular, web-based, and other outlets, and mentoring undergraduates. The hope is that our graduates will not only be highly competitive on the job market (and not just the academic job market) but also have confidence enough in their credentials to market the skills they clearly possess. So, once again, thank you for taking the time to respond to our survey.

Before I hand the stage over to Emily Mitchell-Eaton (Ph.D. - Winders) and alumnus Stephen Buckman (M.A./M.P.A. 2002), I’d like to present a few of the accolades, awards, and publications garnered by our current students.

Our success with top students securing the prestigious NSF Graduate Research Fellow Program award (continued on next page)
Graduate News, continued continues. This year, Kelsey Carlson (Ph.D. – Mitchell) was awarded one for her research on The Dakota People. She now accompanies Pam Sertzen (Winders) and Sean Wang (Winders), who hold the same award. Kelsey also won a Political Geography Specialty Group Student Paper Award (Master’s) for “Drawing Borders to Dispossess and Placing Dakota People in the Present: Alternative Territorialities in Mni Sota Makoce (Minnesota).” She has a forthcoming paper in the Journal of Cultural Geography with Gareth John.

Pam Sertzen (Ph.D. – Winders) adds to her impressive dossier with two papers that have appeared over the last 12 months: One in Letras Verdes: Revista Latino Americana de Estudios Socioambientales and the other in Planning Theory and Practice.

Justin Hartnett (Ph.D. – Millar) won the Wiesnet Medal (plus cash award) for best student paper at the 2014 Eastern Snow Conference and celebrated the publication of his thesis research in the Journal of Applied Meteorology and Climatology.

Sean Wang (Ph.D. – Winders) continues to rake in big awards with an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant for research on the practices and politics of Chinese birth tourism. In addition, he won several internal awards, including a Roscoe-Martin grant, an East Asia Summer Research grant, and the Department’s Shin-Yi Hsu Scholarship to support this work. He also recently became review editor for H-Citizenship at H-Net Reviews (https://networks.h-net.org/h-citizenship), a new review section focusing on citizenship studies.

Not only did Jesse Quinn (Ph.D. – Koch) win a Moynihan European Summer Research Grant ($650) to travel to the Republic of Georgia for preliminary work on his dissertation, but he also won the Syracuse University Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award.

We have swept up several AAG awards! Pat Oberle (Ph.D. – Monmonier) was one of five recipients of the 2015 Professional Development Award given by the AAG’s Graduate Student Affinity Group. Maddy Hamlin (M.A./M.P.A – Mitchell) received a Cultural Geography Specialty Group Master’s-Level Research Grant for her work: “Chicago’s Carceral Geographies: Public Housing and Prisoner ‘Re-entry’ in the City.” Joel Radunzel (M.A. – Monmonier) won the Cartography Specialty Group’s Master’s thesis grant for “Opération Mapping: cartography, intelligence, and the 3rd battle of Gaza 1917” AND the cartography honors student paper competition at this year’s AAG meeting for "Using the right tool: David Woodward’s cartographic framework and the study of military cartography."

As I sign off with my last missive as Graduate Director, passing the reins to Tom Perreault, I hope you’ll keep in touch and pass on news, ideas, and strategies to deal with an ever-changing job landscape. Thanks for listening!

News from the Front Line:

Emily Mitchell-Eaton is a Ph.D. candidate in Geography, with a Certificate of Advanced Study in Women & Gender Studies. She has an MPA in Public Administration from the Maxwell School at Syracuse University (2011) and a BA in Portuguese and Latin American Studies from Smith College (2006).

The seed of my dissertation was planted, unbeknownst to me, in Summer 2011 on the U.S. Pacific islands of Guam and Saipan. While there, I worked as a field researcher on the Island Detention Project, a multi-sited study that examined the experiences of asylum-seekers intercepted, detained, and processed on occupied or semi-sovereign islands (NSF CAREER Award #0847133, PI: Alison Mountz).

This time in the Pacific islands led to my dissertation, which examines the 1986 Compact of Free Association between the U.S. and the Marshall Islands, a former U.S. territory. The Compact’s immigration provision, which allows Marshall Islanders to travel and work visa-free in the U.S., has brought the Pacific to Northwest Arkansas, which is now the largest resettlement site in the Marshallese diaspora. Using U.S. empire as a geographic scale of analysis, my work brings in scholarship on new immigrant destinations to explore how ‘new
destinations of empire’ like Springdale, Arkansas, generate new racial formations, exposing the sustained legacies of the U.S. Pacific presence to immigrant receiving communities in the U.S. mainland. To trace the links between such sites, I conducted fieldwork in a number of places between 2011 and 2014, including Guam, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Hawaii, Arkansas, and Washington, D.C. I rely on a range of qualitative methods to connect these sites, practices, and histories of U.S. empire, including archival research, interviews, and participant observation. Over the past two years, I have conducted interviews with high-level policy-makers—from Marshallese consuls to the mayor of Springdale, Arkansas—as well as with immigration activists, social-service providers, educators, and employers. Together, these interviews expose how U.S. immigration law and policy, implemented at various scales, affect the experiences of postcolonial migrant populations and immigrant receiving communities in the Marshallese diaspora.

In Phoenix I matriculated in the Public Administration Ph.D. program at Arizona State University but soon realized that Public Administration was not for me. My status as a Katrina evacuee got me into a position with the City of Glendale’s Community Revitalization Department, followed by a job with Trammell Crow Investment and Development. This led to my high-risk venture working with a small green development company. The trajectory meant that after two years, I would be a partner: but the company could be around for ten years or go under in less than one. To me it was a risk worth taking. As it turned out, a felonious general contractor drained the capital, and we went under after 6 months.

I then tried the commercial real estate business for about 3 years. A reasonably fulfilling experience, but I still yearned to finish that Ph.D. So, in January 2011 I went back to Arizona State University full time and graduated in Spring 2013 with a Ph.D. in Geography. The real estate business and “real world” experience it lent turned out to be vital to my research: my dissertation on Canal Oriented Development connected both the pragmatic and the academic.

After a grueling job search, including five interviews alongside dissertation writing and teaching, I finally secured a post-doctoral position at the University of Michigan, Planning Department. I had not really considered the post-doc pathway, since I thought it was primarily geared toward the hard sciences, but in this case they wanted a planner, geographer, and designer to address questions of retrofitting and rehabilitating Great Lake Shorelines. It was a great move for me, and it smoothed the pathway to my current tenure-track job at the University of South Florida in Urban Planning. With each twist of my tortuous path, pieces of the puzzle have come together to shape my major research program – community resiliency and planning for climate change.
Faculty News and Updates

Jake Bendix
In the past year, Jake has been exploring various aspects of wildfire in California, looking for new insights into the spatial and temporal patterns of fire occurrence. He presented findings from this work at the meetings of the American Geophysical Union and the Association of American Geographers. He is currently engaged in developing a theoretical framework for understanding the interplay of disturbance regimes affecting California's riparian ecosystems. In April 2015, he was elected president of the AAG Biogeography Specialty Group.

Peng Gao
I am a physical geographer and received my Bachelor’s (Solid Mechanics) and Master’s (Physical Geography) Degrees from Lanzhou University, China and my Ph.D. (Physical Geography) from the Department of Geography, SUNY-Buffalo. My current research focuses on sediment-related fluvial processes and the application of quantitative techniques to the spatial and temporal variations of physical and social environments. In the first direction, my research involves (i) characterizing event-based sediment/phosphorus-transport connectivity over multiple spatial scales within the Oneida Creek Watershed in Central New York; (ii) sediment trends and dynamics across multiple temporal scales and the impact of agricultural and urbanization on sediment variations; and (iii) dynamics of erosion and deposition of water-fluctuation zones in the Three Gorges Reservoir and other Chinese reservoirs. In the second direction, I am exploring (i) problems and solutions of correlation and linear regression analyses in physical geography; (ii) geostatistical characterization of spatially distributed vegetation covers and rainfall events; and (iii) GIS-based environmental analysis for urban planning and architecture design. My research involves skills including field monitoring and survey, laboratory analysis, statistical analysis, and GIS techniques.

Matt Huber
In July 2014, I was awarded an NSF grant for “The Nitrogen Fertilizer Industry: Integrating Industrial Ecology and Political Ecology Approaches.” Over the last year, I’ve taken three research trips to archives, industry conferences, and a fertilizer factory town in southern Louisiana. This summer, I will begin writing up some results in the form of articles. A book still requires more research over the next year. This summer, I hope to accomplish as much as possible before another major life event in August – parenthood! Angela and I are very excited! It also marks a “new chapter” at SU as I will officially be an Associate Professor, starting in the fall.

Over the last year, I’ve taught some of my favorite courses (e.g. GEO 340: Geography of Oil, GEO 273: World Political Economy) but also helped launch a new initiative of one-credit modules for graduate students. Mine focused on “Negotiating the Job Market.” The course was designed not only to offer advice and tips for graduate students interested in pursuing academic jobs but also to collect significant amounts of data on the nature of the job market in geography. The course turned into a kind of “research collective,” and we expect to publish our results. My non-academic pursuits still include baseball and guitar, but lately, I’ve been spending time reading baby books (which, as it turns out, are of significant interest for a nature-society geographer).

Natalie Koch
Natalie has been hard at work on several research projects, both continuing her longtime interest in Central Asia and building a new focus on the Arab Gulf states. She was recently awarded an NSF Catalyzing New International Collaborations seed grant for her project with anthropologist, Neha Vora (Lafayette College), “Post-oil futures: The impact of American higher education in the Gulf Arab states.” For this study they will conduct research in Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, and Kuwait. Natalie also received a Fulbright Core Faculty Teaching Fellowship in Azerbaijan for Spring 2016. In Fall 2014, she joined PONARS Eurasia (Program on New Approaches to Research and Security in Eurasia), an invitation-only global network of social scientists that seeks to promote scholarship and policy engagement on transnational and comparative topics within the Eurasian space. In 2014, her work appeared in journals such as Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, Urban Geography, Geoforum, and Geopolitics. She is also editing a book, under contract with Routledge, Critical geographies of sport: Space, power, and sport in global perspective. Natalie continues to teach undergraduate courses in political and urban geography and regional studies.
Natalie Koch, continued
and has reintroduced two graduate seminars, “Geopolitics and the State” and Political Geography. She now serves as President of the AAG Political Geography Specialty Group, is Secretary/Treasurer of the Middle East Specialty Group, and Secretary of the Central Eurasian Studies Society. Lastly, Natalie continues as the SU Cycling Club’s faculty advisor – and to herself pedal around Central New York as much as possible.

Susan Millar
Susan continues research on cold regions’ environmental processes, with a focus on geomorphology and micro-climate, in both contemporary and Quaternary settings. Recent work on “Colluvium” has been published as part of the Springer Reference Encyclopedia of Planetary Landforms and Other Surface Features (2015). A co-authored paper, “The Tight Dialectic: The Anthropocene and the Capitalist Production of Nature”, with Don Mitchell has been accepted at Antipode. This collaboration continues their joint interest in the history of environmental science, in particular its intersection with the atomic age, and Susan’s recent experience teaching a new course: The Geography of the Anthropocene. Her presentation at the AAG, “Spatial and Temporal Changes in Spatial and Temporal Patterns of Soil Freezing and River Response to Snow,” was based on ten years of data collected from her network of dataloggers in the Oneida watershed, monitoring soil and air temperatures, as well as other environmental variables. A manuscript from this project will be submitted this summer. This work was also the subject of a presentation in January to the CNY skeptics group – they were convinced by the data! Finally, as Millar steps down after two terms as the Director of Graduate Studies, she looks forward to more research time.

Don Mitchell
It’s been a reasonably quiet year for me, marked by lots of introductory Human Geography teaching as well as struggling all fall with a small cadre of students to understand volumes two and three of Marx’s Capital. Compared to volume one, two and three are quite abstract (and incomplete to boot) but essential for understanding the logic of capital as a totality. I look forward to teaching the books again in the future. Maybe I will get them by then. On the research front three big projects continue to obsess me. My (formerly NSF-funded) project with Lynn Staeheli (Durham University) and Kafui Attoh (CUNY), “Public Life and Democracy in the United States and United Kingdom,” limps along, as each of us tries to carve out a bit of time to “write up our results.” I’ve been devoting more time to a collaborative project I inherited from Neil Smith, “Revolting New York,” which will be a popular historical geography of riots, rebellions, uprisings, and revolutions in New York City from the 1640s to the present. With some luck, we’ll send the manuscript to the publishers (University of Georgia Press) in September. During Spring 2016, I will teach a course of the same name – which I hope will include a week in the Big Apple uncovering the city’s radical past in the landscape. Then there’s “Food Across Borders,” an interdisciplinary collaboration with Matt Garcia (Arizona State), Melanie DuPuis (Pace University), and a dozen or so geographers, literature scholars, anthropologists, historians, and sociologists. We’ve met twice (in Taos in September and Scottsdale in February), and Matt, Melanie, and I are spending the summer editing the resulting chapters – which range from analyses of culinary mixings to the role of borders in establishing relations of work in the fields, processing plants, and restaurants – before sending that off to the publisher (Rutgers University Press) this fall. Keep your eye out for both volumes!

Mark Monmonier
Mark had an eventful year, to say the least. In December he published Adventures in Academic Cartography: A Memoir (Bar Scale Press), a personal history of cartography covering slightly more than a half-century. In late April, during the annual AAG meeting, the University of Chicago Press released Cartography in the Twentieth Century (Volume Six of the History of Cartography), which he edited. Supported by three grants from the NSF and two from the Gladys Krieble Delmas Foundation and developed with the help of a 35-member advisory board and four associate editors, the 2,000-page, two-book reference work took two decades to produce and includes more than 1,100 images and 529 entries, authored by over 300 contributors. In late winter he was awarded an NSF grant for a new project on patented cartographic inventions. While on research leave during Spring 2015, he began writing a new book tentatively titled Inventing Cartography. In addition to presentations on the patents project at the AAG and in Antwerp at the International Conference on the History of Cartography, he published two book chapters (“The Cartographic Discovery of the Great Lakes Snowbelts” and “Mercators...” continued on next page)
Mark Monmonier, continued
Projektion: Konformität, Maßstab und Kontroverse”). Mark is working with Jane Read on a new introductory geospatial course, to be team-taught in Spring 2016. On the home front, he and Marge became grandparents in February and flew west, to San Francisco, in early May to see Jo, Anthony, and baby Camden.

Anne Mosher
This has been a good year. Interesting research and writing projects about flexible pedagogies and technology-enhanced teaching and learning in higher ed geography, digital humanities and social memory, and the geopolitics of infrastructure. Wonderful undergrad students in the senior seminar (check out the fruit of their labor: http://geocuse.syr.edu), the U.S. and geography education classes, and grad students from environmental engineering, environmental planning, anthropology, history, and geography in urban historical geography. Professional highlight? Co-teaching a graduate seminar with Peg Hermann (Political Science) and Keli Perrin (SU Law School) on crisis and disaster management that included a five-day field trip to Iceland during Maymester 2015. We spent half the visit meeting with Icelandic crisis and disaster researchers, managers, and political leaders. The other half consisted of exploring an absolutely amazing landscape—rifts, faults, lava flows, volcanos, glaciers, flood plains, waterfalls, and mountains. And it never got dark. I would go back to Reykjavik in a heartbeat! On the personal front: Carl and the kids are good. In Fall 2015, Meghan will be a senior, and Matt will be a sophomore at Bishop Grimes High School. She loves chemistry; plays flute, piccolo, alto sax, varsity volleyball and softball; and will be a student executive council officer. He plays trombone, soccer, and baseball (his passion) and seems to have a gift for writing and—yikes—everything social studies-related. We’ll see where that that leads. Perhaps he’ll pick up some tips from Meghan’s college search, currently underway. Exciting times, indeed!

Jane M. Read
Jane continued to focus on developing a spatial history of Onondaga Lake. She is working with collaborators on a book proposal highlighting the varied stories of Onondaga Lake and is excited to begin work on a spin-off project with Rachel May (lead investigator) and Philip Arnold (co-investigator) on a Digital Atlas of Onondaga Lake. They were awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Digital Humanities Start-up Grant for this project. The interactive platform, capturing the many different stories about the lake, will serve as a resource for community members, researchers, teachers, and students.

In the classroom, Jane experimented with some of the technologies she learned about in the 2014 Summer Institute for Technology Enhanced Teaching and (continued on next page)

http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/geo/
Jane M. Read, continued

Learning and looks forward to further incorporating technologies outside the classroom. She participated in a mobile mapping workshop that she is excited to try out this year, too. In service, Jane completed her third (and final) year as Board Member of the University Consortium of Geographic Information Science. She co-organized the UCGIS 20th Anniversary Symposium, which attracted a distinguished group of GIScientists to Washington, DC. She continues to serve on the steering committee of the GIS&T Body of Knowledge.

Jane was proud to see advisee Kelly Nickodem (MA) graduate in May. She is also pleased to note that she survived, and even enjoyed, her first year as Director of Undergraduate Studies and looks forward to working with alumni, students, and faculty in the coming year.

David J. Robinson

December 31, 2014, marked the end of my dual roles in the administration of the Conference of Latin Americanist Geographers (CLAG), the first regional organization of the AAG. Since 2014, I have served as CLAG’s Executive Director, working with a committee to provide data and considered opinions related to meeting sites, membership, committee formation, negotiations with non-university presses, relations with affiliated national and international organizations, and many other “behind-the-scene” issues.

Since 2004, I also served as Editor of the Journal of Latin American Geography, CLAG’s multi-lingual publication (Spanish, English, Portuguese, French), which, after the transition from its former annual Yearbook (1970-2001), needed to become established as a premier international outlet for research on geographical aspects of Latin America. Volumes 3-13 reflect its growth in size (from one issue per year in 2004 to three issues per year from 2012), as well as its florescence of content. The 700 pages of Volume 13, with half the authors from Latin America, reflect the wide range of content—e.g., government, favela growth, economic circuits, amenity migration, biodiversity, Brazilian music, ethnic-territorial autonomy, the puquina language, Amazonian Indian numbers in 1492, ecological citizenship, tsunami risks in Nicaragua, and road development in Guyana’s Rupununi. The list is long and the diversity remarkable; and such articles combine with more than thirty book reviews.

Jonnell A. Robinson

This year, I worked with undergraduate and graduate students, the Geography Department, and members of the CNY community to undertake a variety of community-based and participatory mapping projects. Under my supervision, student interns in the Community Geography Program mapped and analyzed organic farming operations in New York State, documented farming practices of Syracuse’s refugees, and examined public transportation access by inner-city residents to manufacturing jobs on Syracuse’s suburban fringe. In the spring, students in my Community Geography course completed research projects on child care and early education access among low-income families; urban street trees and storm water retention in Syracuse; Syracuse’s pre-prohibition beer brewing industry; neighborhood revitalization on Syracuse’s northside; and access to banking services among low-income households in Syracuse. Students participating in these projects received a Chancellor’s Award for Civic Engagement in April. Maps and reports from these projects can be found at communitygeography.org. This summer, my colleague in the Department of Food Studies and I will conduct a survey of mobile farmers’ markets operating in the U.S., with funding from the Falk School. This research is an extension of a pilot project that examined mobile farmers’ markets operating in Syracuse during Summer 2011.

Graduate student Kristin Cutler converses with Anne Mosher about something—perhaps her pet project?
Tod Rutherford

After six years as Departmental Chair, in 2014-15 I enjoyed a leave, teaching a course in the fall at the Florence, Italy campus of SU Abroad and continuing Italian language training. In Spring 2015, I began a research project on changes to Italian employment protection legislation. I have continued work on a number of other projects, including a $3-million project on automotive industry economic development policy with colleagues at various Canadian universities as part of the Automotive Partnership Council, which is funded by the Canadian federal government, Ford and Toyota of Canada, and the UNIFOR trade union. I am also collaborating on an ESRC (United Kingdom)-funded project on regional institutions and foreign direct investment attraction in the European Union and Canada, focusing on Ontario and Quebec. I am most fortunate to have a number of excellent graduate students working with me. Kriangsak Teerakowitkajorn began in 2012 and is doing his PhD research on labor organizing in different regions of Thailand, while Tiago Alves Teixeira, who began his PhD in 2013, is studying cluster governance in the Brazilian and US aerospace industry. I am looking forward to being back in the Geography Department this fall, but most of all, my partner Yasmin and I are looking forward to the birth of our first child!

John Western

Much that has occurred during this academic year mirrors what you read in last year’s bulletin, so my account will be a little shorter. Returning refreshed from our annual two-week, end-of-summer getaway to a Maine coastal island, I started Fall 2014 with two well-tried courses: GEO 219/HNR 260: American Diversity and Unity and MAX 132: Global Community. Spring 2015 consisted of GEO 362: The European City and GEO 425: South Africa and Namibia. Its title has lengthened: “and Namibia” has been added, after a first visit in May 2014 to that country formerly occupied by white-ruled South Africa from 1915 through 1990. Much energy, organization, and thought were also expended on the creation of a month-long summer study tour, “The South African City.” SU Abroad and I thought it had gained the requisite dozen students for it to fly, but when push came to shove and a real deposit had to be put down, six withdrew. So the course had to be canceled. Seeing that this was the project which I had submitted for my successful Meredith Professor bid two years ago, such was a disappointment.

Research has consisted of finishing my geographical-historical-societal observation memoirs, focusing most particularly on the Africa I lived in 40 years or so ago: (continued on next page)

Farhana Sultana

I continue my research and teaching on a range of interdisciplinary projects related to water governance, gender justice, climate change, globalization, and international development. I published articles in journals such as Professional Geographer, Dialogues in Human Geography, Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Water, and Third World Quarterly. In addition, I published invited chapters in The International Handbook of Political Ecology, A Handbook of Gender and Development, Companion to Political Geography, and Achieving Sustainability. Current endeavors include several writing activities, notably an invited textbook with Wiley entitled Development Geographies, co-editing a collection entitled Eating/Drinking/Surviving (Springer), and being a co-author in the United Nations’ Global Gender and Environment Outlook. I am simultaneously working on two collaborative projects: “Building Community Capacity to Adapt to Climate Change across Sites, Groups and Scales” (funded by the Moynihan Institute, PARCC and CEPA at SU) and “International WaTERS Network (Water-related Training Education and Research in the Global South)” (funded by SSHRC, Canada). In the past year, I served as a Scientific Member of the International Year of Global Understanding Initiative of the IGU, Chair of the AAG Development Geographies Specialty Group, and Alumni Interviewer for Princeton University. I was a speaker for SU’s 2015 World Water Week, delivered invited talks at Cornell, Minnesota, and UN World Water Assessment Programme (Italy) and presented at the AAG meetings in Chicago and the Feminist Geography conference in Omaha.

Quiz Question: what is the appropriate collective term for a group of geography faculty members?
**John Western, continued**

Burundi, and most fully, South Africa. Patricia and I went as tourists for two weeks to the latter country last May, engendering reflections over being there in that mode as opposed to my previous role as an academic investigator. Service has consisted of the usual suspects: the Future Professoriate Program; running my 12th Geofest (this next will be my last one); various College committees; a final year as the Maxwell School member of the Honors Core Faculty. A number of hikes were organized: an ascent of Black Bear Mountain in the Adirondacks at the peak of autumn colors; a walk along the sand dune beaches at Lake Ontario’s eastern end; and, most unforgettably, what has become known as the Highland Forest Death March, on February 22. This was the coldest month ever recorded in Syracuse, the temperature never rising above freezing. This time (see last year’s bulletin), our vehicles did not leave the road for the comfort of a snowbank, but we did find the at least 2-foot-deep untrodden snow an exhausting challenge. It was a fabulous exertion.

To conclude, the family continues to thrive. Grace enthuses about her student life at Colgate and will intern in Washington DC this summer at Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand’s office. Charlie moved from his classy French restaurant to a steakhouse much closer to his pad in lower Manhattan. He waits on the Wall Street crowd there, whereby the stakes – i.e., the tips – have proved higher. Patricia and I putter along in new-found liberty. After two decades or more of kids, we now find we can simply go off together for mini-trips. Yess!

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**Robert Wilson**

Bob is a historical geographer and environmental historian with research interests in animal histories and geographies, historical water governance, and past and current environmental social movements. Some of his current projects include a forthcoming article on animal migration in North American history, a book chapter (co-authored with Jane Read) on the 19th-century history of Onondaga Lake, and an annotated bibliography on the field of environmental history for Oxford Bibliographies. Much of Bob’s recent work has focused on contemporary climate activism, and he is in the midst of writing a number of articles on the subject as well as a book manuscript tentatively titled, *Forging the Climate Movement*. He will work on this project next spring as a visiting fellow at the Rachel Carson Center in Munich, Germany.

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In addition to his research, Bob teaches a number of courses including Environment and Society, Animals and Society, Geographies of Sustainability, and Environmental History (at the undergraduate and graduate levels). Last spring, he taught Writing Geography, a graduate seminar designed to teach the fundamentals of academic writing as well as some of the techniques of creative nonfiction. In the fall, he will teach a new graduate course titled Climate Change: History, Geography, and Politics.

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In addition to presenting at the AAG conference, Bob was a panelist at a symposium on Race and the Anthropocene and at an exhibit opening on Art, Activism, and Climate Change at SU’s Lubin House in Manhattan. This July, he will present and participate in a number of sessions at the International Historical Geography Conference in London.

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**Jamie Winders**

This year has been busy. As a new chair, I’ve had a steep learning curve! Luckily, I have fabulous colleagues I can bug for advice. When I wasn’t answering emails, attending meetings, or writing memos, I had the privilege of teaching our feminist geography graduate seminar. This course focused on social reproduction and gave me the opportunity to delve into foundational texts on the relationship between “work” and “life.” These readings fed into my ongoing work with Barbara Ellen Smith on new approaches to social reproduction. We presented elements of our ideas at the 2015 AAG conference and will do so again at the 2015 Global Conference on Economic Geography in Oxford, England. I continue work on my cultural-geography book. I’m half-way through the chapters and, with any luck, will have a complete draft in December. This year, I took on new editorial responsibilities at the *International Migration Review* and was honored to be part of the special issue celebrating its 50th anniversary. I also had the pleasure of watching several dissertations take shape, with some nearly finished, some in progress, and some just beginning. I continue to be amazed by my students and enjoy being along for the ride as they develop their ideas. As always, I follow Kentucky basketball and try to squeeze in rides on a feisty thoroughbred named Turtle. In Summer 2014, after a 20-year hiatus, I again entered the show ring. We didn’t always bring home ribbons, but I had a good time!
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