

Panther Geographer

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Upcoming Events:

- Rama Prasada Mohapatra, Dept of Geography, UWM and Abhay Mohapatra "The Adivasis of Eastern Ghats, India." Friday, April 29, 3:00pm
- Geography 600 Research Symposium & Award & Graduation Ceremony at the AGS Library. Friday, May 6th, 9am-5pm

Letter from the Chair

Distinguished Professor Mark D. Schwartz



I am sure most (if not all) of you are aware that 2011 has been a turbulent time for public employees in the State of Wisconsin! We are deeply concerned about the combined impact of significant cuts in university employee compensation as well as pending cuts to UW-Milwaukee's budget itself. Neither of these things are positive developments. However, despite this unwelcome situation, the Department of Geography has a great deal of good news to celebrate and share with you! First of all, our department's doctoral program was ranked 19th out of the 49 geography programs evaluated in the recent National Research Council (NRC) report. This is a significant improvement from our ranking in the last report (1994), and important recognition of our progress. Secondly, I am pleased to report that two of my doctoral students have recently secured faculty positions. Dr. Liang Liang, who received his doctoral degree in 2009, has accepted an assistant professor position in the Department of Geography at the University of Kentucky (in Lexington). The other student, Jonathan Hanes (who will receive his doctoral degree this

spring), has accepted an assistant professor position in the Department of Geography at Northern Michigan University (Marquette, MI). I am very proud of the achievements of both of them. Lastly, the department will have two new assistant professors and one academic staff member joining the department in Fall 2011. The faculty members are Dr. Hyejin Yoon, an economic geographer who received her doctoral degree from Ohio State University, and Dr. Zengwang Xu, a Geographic Information Science (GIS) specialist, who received his doctoral degree from Texas A&M University. The academic staff member is Patti Day, who has been given a three-year contract to teach two courses per semester for us, and supervise our joint (with the Urban Planning Department) GIS post-bachelorette certificate program. So, this is just a small sample of the good things happening recently in Geography at UW-Milwaukee. As always, your continued interest and support are greatly appreciated!



21st Century Fellowship

Two Geographers received the 2010-2011 21st Century Fellowship

Prof. Day and Prof. Holifield share their research agendas:

By Dr. Michael J. Day

During the 2010-2011 academic year, I am the Master of Liberal Studies Fellow in UWM's Center for 21st Century Studies. As such, Mick is working on a research project examining intersections of time and space in caves, and is teaching in Spring 2011 a MLS seminar whose topic is time and space underground.

The research project, with a preliminary title of "Underground enigmas: dimensions of time and space in caves", investigates space-time relationships in natural underground cavities, where light is absent and vision is largely irrelevant. Caves are conventionally defined as natural underground spaces, yet the space itself, its reality and its meaning are often ignored.

Traditional definitions of caves refer to them as "being large enough to be negotiable by a person", although such a size limitation has no scientific rationale, because smaller cavities develop and function in much the same way as vast caverns. Time plays a fundamental role too. Caves cannot be older than the rocks in which they are formed, although they may be significantly younger. Cave development may commence during lithification (the transition from sediment to rock), or may be initiated by "threshold" events, such as tectonic uplift or climate change, but long-term "non-events" play important roles too. The constancy of cave environments is often stressed, yet this is temporally constrained and merits holistic treatment.

Cave life also raises intriguing questions about time and space. Troglotic species, adapted so as to have become obligate cave dwellers, have distinct morphological and behavioral characteristics. These adaptations are also paralleled by spatial characteristics, with species having restricted ranges, in some cases a single cave, and individuals having limited ranges within the cave. Cave life also exhibits temporality, most profoundly in the form of circadian rhythms: activity patterns with a framework of approximately 25 hour periods. People who spend extended periods of time in caves (the current record is 366 days) also demonstrate similar temporal pat-

terns, and frequently become temporally disoriented, losing sense of "real" time.

There are also significant human dimensions and perceptions of cave space and time. Much of our understanding of hominid evolution is based on evidence discovered in caves. People have used caves for a multitude of purposes: water supply, storage, cultivation, illicit activities, entertainment, military activities, refuge from and resistance to invaders and colonial forces, recreation and tourism. Caves have also occupied a theological dimension in human perceptions, serving as religious and experiential settings for animists, Buddhists, Christians and others. The ancient Greeks and the Central American Maya regarded caves as a link between the surface and the underworld, between the present and the past.

The MLS seminar expands upon the topic of space and time in caves, examining the concept of "underground" in broader contexts. MLS students have a wide variety of backgrounds and, among them, individuals are interested in underground archaeology and the use of caves for military purposes and as religious refuges. Other participants are interested in human-produced analogs of caves, such as mines, tunnels, subways and sewers, while others are investigating parallels between caves and other restricted spaces, such as prisons. Other lines of inquiry include caves as literary vehicles and symbols, notions of the underground as covert or avant-garde, and the nature of various "underworlds", including the religious and the criminal.

By Dr. Ryan Holifield

I have been fortunate this year to have the opportunity to join UWM's Center for 21st Century Studies as one of its current research fellows. This research fellowship program brings together scholars from humanities, arts, and social science departments from across the campus, as well as one scholar from elsewhere in the UW System, and one from elsewhere in the country. During the year, in addition to working on our research projects, we meet regularly at seminars to discuss our work and participate in

21st Century Fellowship (cont'd..)

C21 events. For instance, I served as a moderator at the interdisciplinary Embodied Placemaking Symposium, hosted by C21 last fall; I also got to help host two guest geographers, Karen Till and Arun Saldanha, who participated in the C21 lecture series this year. This has been an exciting year to be involved with the Center, since it has a dynamic new director, Richard Grusin (in the English department – but with a keen interest in geographic topics).

Although our research projects all in one way or another address this year's theme, "Figuring Place and Time," all of us wondered at the beginning of the fall semester how we would be able to talk with each other across disciplinary boundaries. In addition to the two geographers, the fellows this year include a composer of eco-acoustic music, an artist specializing in installations, a creative writer, a literary theorist, and historians of French film, medieval art, and World War II-era Central Europe. But ever since the first seminar, one of the most surprising and rewarding aspects of the fellowship has been the opportunity to learn from each other and discover connections among our interests that we would never have

otherwise noticed.

My primary project this year focuses on efforts by the US Environmental Protection Agency to develop a consistent method for identifying "environmental justice areas": that is, communities in which low-income or minority populations are disproportionately impacted by the adverse effects of toxic pollution. In many ways, the efforts are similar to other, well-documented attempts by government agencies to translate place-based lifeworlds into abstract, mappable, and governable spaces. I am finding, however, that the ongoing process of developing this methodology has been beset not only by the challenges of balancing competing public interests and resolving persistent technical complications, but also by resistance, conflict, and controversy within the federal agency itself. I am also working with Ryan Covington on a related project, in which we are examining and attempting to theorize relationships between "place as lived" and the discourse of environmental (in)justice.

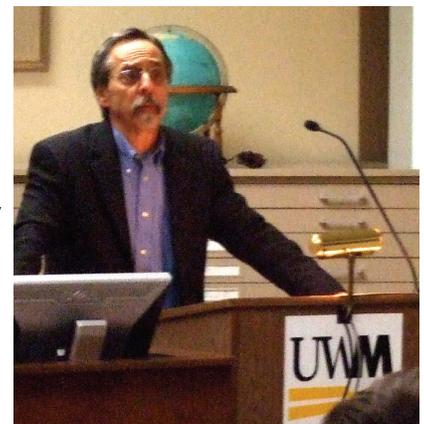
Harold and Florence Mayer Lecturer Speaker: Dr. Craig Colten

By Dr. Craig Colten

Only months before Hurricane Katrina, Craig Colten saw the release of his book *An Unnatural Metropolis* which provided a long-term perspective of New Orleans's struggle to convert a flood-prone wetland into a metropolitan center. Following the devastating storm, he has found himself in an unusual situation for a historical geographer, namely looking toward the future. News media and hazards recovery authorities sought his input on the causes behind the calamity and what the city would look like in the future. He now is engaged in the recovery process through his efforts to analyze and build community resilience. Despite the immediacy of his current efforts, he still finds that a historical perspective is fundamental to rebuilding the city. In his talk at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, professor Colten traced the erosion of resilience between two transformative hurricanes – Betsy in 1965 and Katrina in

2005. This review set the stage for an assessment of the long-term resilience building efforts since the most recent storm.

Craig Colten is the Carl O. Sauer Professor of Geography at Louisiana State University, editor of the *Geographical Review*, a research associate with the Community and Regional Resilience Institute at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and as a member of the U.S. Department of Interior's Strategic Science Working Group.



Geography Faculty News

Dr. Woonsup Choi

Dr. Choi was awarded \$2,816 Salary for Undergraduate Research Fellows from the Office of Undergraduate Research for the academic year 2010-2011. The fund will be spent to cover the salary of Geography major Ulrike Galasinski who will assist his project entitled "Effect of climatic variability and change on the Milwaukee River streamflow."



He presented a poster entitled "Estimation of missing precipitation data using the North American Regional Reanalysis" at the AWRA Water Resources Conference in Philadelphia on the 1st of November 2010. He was awarded a Faculty/Academic Staff Travel Award to Implement Overseas Field Research Experiences for Undergraduates in the amount of \$3,000 by the Center for International Education. The fund will help cover the expense of my travel to Korea with an undergraduate student in this summer. He gave a presentation regarding groundwater recharge and urban growth in Waukesha County at the American Water Resources Association Wisconsin Section meeting in Appleton on the 4th of March 2011.

Dr. Michael J. Day

Dr. Day's recent publications include:

- 1) Day, M.J. 2010. Human interaction with Caribbean karst landscapes: past, present and future. *Acta Carsoologica* 39(1): 137-146;
- 2) Day, M.J. 2010. Challenges to sustainability of the Caribbean karst. *Geologia Croatica* 63(2): 63-68;
- 3) Huang, W. and Day, M.J. 2011. A GIS and remote sensing based morphometric analysis of tower karst and cockpit karst in south Guizhou, China. *Proceedings Asian Trans-Disciplinary*



- Karst Conference 2011: 429-436;*
 4) Ulrich, P.B. and Day, M.J. 2011. Natural and anthropogenic hazards in the karst of Bohol, the Philippines. *Proceedings Asian Trans-Disciplinary Karst Conference 2011: 313-321.*

Dr. Rina Ghose

Dr. Ghose was invited to present her research "Power to the People? Empowerment and Marginalization in Citizen Participation and Spatial Knowledge Production in the Inner-City Neighborhoods", at the Department of Geography, Syracuse University in February, 2011.



In addition, she has several publications:

- 1) Ghose, R. "Politics and power in the use of GIS for community decision making", book chapter in *Handbook of GIS and Society Research*, edited by Timothy Nyerges, Helen Couclelis, Robert McMaster, (SAGE publications), Forthcoming.
- 2) Mukherjee, F. and Ghose, R. "Tracing the Historic Trajectory of GIS Development and its Impacts on Contemporary Practice". *Journal of Urban Technology*, forthcoming.
- 3) Mukherjee, F. and Ghose, R. "Exploring the Complexities of Community Engaged GIS", *International Journal of Applied Geospatial Research*. Accepted.
- 4) Elwood, S. and Ghose, R. Reflection Essay: PPGIS in Community Development Planning. Book chapter in *Classics in Cartography: Reflections on Influential Articles from Cartographica*, edited by Martin Dodge (John Wiley & Sons, UK), p. 107-118.

Dr. Anna Mansson McGinty

Dr. McGinty has two articles accepted for publication.

- 1) "Teaching against Culture" in *Geography of Islam*. *The Professional Geographer*, forthcoming.



Geography Faculty News (cont'd..)

2) "Faith Drives Me to Be an Activist." Muslim American Women's Struggle for Recognition and Social Justice. *The Muslim World*.

She was the UWM Libraries Featured Scholar in January after her talk "Blue-and-yellow Islam?"

Muslim Identities in Sweden" as part of the AGS Academic Adventurers series in December 2010. She is continuing her current research project on Muslim women's activism and gender identity in Milwaukee.

Mapping the Impact of Habitat For Humanity: A New Research Agenda

By Prof. Anne Bonds and Prof. Judith Kenny

We are excited to share details about our new research project, which examines the role and efficacy of non-profits in the provision of affordable housing, focusing specifically on the organization Habitat for Humanity (HFH) and its relationships to other non-profit housing organizations and local governments. This project comes at an important moment for housing in the United States - shaped by a dramatic economic downturn, spectacular drops in property values, and stagnant housing markets - all of which have worked to increase the already high demand for affordable housing. Habitat is currently one of the most well-known nonprofit organizations working in the area of affordable housing, yet there is a surprising dearth of scholarship examining its outcomes. Our project seeks to understand the neighborhood impacts of the HFH's building efforts in key cities across the nation through the establishment of a network of urban scholars. As geographers, we see the pressing need for a spatial focus on research examining the role of HFH in housing for two very important reasons: first, geographic variations in local economies and political cultures, housing markets, and depth of need require an analytic framework that acknowledges the distinctness of specific urban environments and housing issues in shaping HFH's outcomes. Second, the affiliate structure of HFH allows local chapters a significant degree of autonomy in developing strategies to address housing need. This means that the ways in which HFH is responding to need is also geographically distinct. Our research takes these local contingencies into account.

Last fall, we applied for a UWM Research Growth Initiative Grant and we plan to apply for an NSF grant next fall to support our research. To date, we've been engaged in intensive research in Milwaukee and Portland and extensive work in other cities. We'll be presenting this research at the Annual AAG meeting in Seattle later in April. Perhaps one of the most exciting elements of the project is its collaborative nature. We look forward to expanding the project by connecting with geographers and urban scholars at other institutions. The project emerged from an Urban Studies MA thesis project and we look forward to working with future graduate students as well.



Graduate Student News

Brad Willems

2010 was a busy year for me in terms of working a full-time job, returning back to UWM for my Graduate Degree, and traveling.

The new year started out with winning a trip, through my then employer, to Puerto Vallarta for a week with about 30 other people.

I started graduate school by traveling to Vancouver over the summer for the study abroad course with Prof. Chris DeSousa.

Just as the Fall semester started, I was able to find a full-time position with the Focus on Energy Program, working with the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program. In November, I traveled to Europe for 10 days going to many places including Frankfurt, Munich, and Passau in Germany. Then Prague, and Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic. Followed by Vienna, Melk, and the Wachau Valley (aka wine country) in Austria. Then lastly Budapest, Hungary. I witnessed so much in such a short time and can't wait to go back.

As of January 2011, I traveled to the Dominican Republic for 8 days for a family vacation and was amazed at how much the resorts invested in renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Lastly, I received a scholarship from the Wisconsin Association of Energy Engineers for continuing my education in the Energy Efficiency area of study. All-in-all it has been one busy year and I look forward to what's next...

P.S. My parents went to the Super Bowl in Dallas and cheered them to victory! GO PACK!

Nicholas Padilla

Every January for the past 8 years I have participated in the Angel on my Shoulder Polar Bear Plunge on Big St. Germain Lake. This year the temperature without the wind chill was a balmy 4 degrees. The polar bear plunge is a truly Wisconsin experience and I recommend that everyone try it at least once. If nothing



else, they provide support to worthy charities and you will never forget jumping in a frozen lake.

Carrie Philpott

Carrie Philpott received the Roberto Hernandez Center Faculty and Graduate Student Applied Latino Research Grant to help fund her MA research on Latina immigrant activism, citizenship, and identity. She

plans on beginning her research this Spring semester in Milwaukee's Southside. She has also received the Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship for study of intensive elementary Mixtec language through the San Diego State University's summer program in Oaxaca, Mexico. Meanwhile, she has practiced driving in the snow with fellow graduate student and native Mid-westerner Rodney Ranken as life in Georgia was mostly snow-free. Needless to say, she welcomes warmer weather.



Wei Huang

Tremendously depressed by the heavy snow, I chose to escape from the chilly winter when I got an invitation to participate in the Asian Trans-Karst Disciplinary Conference 2011 in Indonesia in January. The venue site was located in Yogyakarta, a popular tourist city in southeast of Jakarta.

Indonesia is a country consisting of thousands of small islands. Not surprisingly, it has a huge variety of cultural, linguistic, and ethnic groups. As most of us know, this country is the largest Muslim country in the world in terms of its population. I would never have known that people here are so dedicated to their Muslim belief if I had not made this trip. Interestingly, I was always woken up by a mysterious sound that calls for the first of the 5 daily prayers around 4:00 am every morning. Throughout the day and night, regardless of what they are doing, most of the people here will properly go to the nearest mosque to conduct their prayers. To them, the prayer is a way of life rather than an obligation.



Graduate Student News (cont'd..)

Besides the meeting, the committee provided a field trip to the famous Gunung Sewu Karst on the Java Island, where you can see thousands of cockpit karsts distributed along the coast line. I can feel that people here are really proud of having such landscapes in their country.

It's really good to know some people from other countries that share similar research interests with you and this will broaden your horizon.

Honestly, I won't mind returning, considering the beautiful scenery, amazing gourmet, and the fantastic spa course available right there.

Reflections on the Critical Geography Mini-Conference

The Mini-Conference was held in Nov. 5-6, 2010 and organized by Prof. Bonds, Prof. Holifield, and Prof. Sziarto with the help of several graduate students. A few of them share their reflections here.

By Gregg Culver

Presenting at last November's Annual Mini-Conference on Critical Geography was perhaps the single most formative event of the first semester of my doctoral studies. It was not only my first time presenting at a large professional conference, but my first time being surrounded by emerging scholars in the (hopefully) growing field of critical transportation geography. While I feel as though I left my own session with just as many questions as I came in with, I also left with inspiration from the other participants' and attendees' comments, ideas, and insights. Most importantly, though, I left with a great sense of excitement: the knowledge that there are others – real people – who are equally passionate about my particular niche of human geography. I left with the conviction that there is a great deal of work yet to be done. It is with that excitement that I look forward to presenting, attending, and schmoozing at the upcoming Seattle AAG.

By Nick Padilla

My involvement in the Annual Mini-Conference on Critical Geography did not include presenting any research, but I feel that I still took a great deal from the conference. I, of course, met a number of scholars who are engaged in work that is related to my interests in Latin America. More importantly, following the Mini-Conference I was genuinely excited about my choice to focus on critical geography and to attend UWM. The Conference was, by all accounts, the largest one in the history of the event – a good sign that the field is active and growing. The 17th Annual Mini-Conference on Critical Geography was intellectually draining, but it reflected the vitality of critical geography and highlighted UWM as a site of excellent geographical research.

By Margaret Pettygrove

In November 2010, I enjoyed the opportunity to present at the 17th Annual Critical Geography Mini-Conference. The variety of topics covered at the 3-day conference reflected a diversity that is perhaps best characterized as plural critical geographies. Sessions such as "Interrogating the Shadow State," "Critical Natures," and "Complicity/Resistance/Radicality," provided intriguing perspectives on familiar issues and provoked new questions to stimulate possible future research. One of the greatest values of the conference was in the space it created for the mingling of critical geographers from many disparate places. As a young scholar-in-training, I was thrilled to meet, converse, and share my work with scholars whose radical interests intersect with my own.

By Jonathan Burkham

As an organizer of the Mini-Conference on Critical Geography, I gained invaluable insight into the process of putting together and successfully executing an academic conference. Perhaps the greatest challenge was collecting over a hundred abstracts and working with our team of conference organizers to design sessions that would be exciting and beneficial to the participants. The fact that many of us spent so much time making sure that every participant had a special place in the conference agenda speaks to our collective dedication to the discipline and our department. I think we all recognized that a successful conference was important to advancing the reputation of the department. Plus, it gave us a chance to highlight the great research we are doing in the UWM Geography Department!

