

# Panther Geographer

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## Letter from the Chair

**Distinguished Professor Mark D. Schwartz**

What a difference a year makes! Last March, Milwaukee was basking in record breaking warm temperatures with daily highs in the 60s, 70s, and even a few 80s. This year has been quite different, with the out-



look at mid-month appearing to tilt toward a cooler-than-normal month, with greater-than-normal snowfall. However, such differences are really nothing unusual for Wisconsin. I am sure that spring will arrive, eventually. As part of my on-going research of seasonal transitions, a camera will soon be mounted on top of one of the Sandburg Residence Hall towers, directed northward and downward toward Downer Woods. This vantage point will allow continuous monitoring of seasonal changes in the trees within this area, for better comparison to other measures recorded on the ground and by satellite observations.

As for the Geography department, we are starting preparations to move back to our permanent home on the fourth floor of Bolton Hall from our currently temporary quarters in the Northwest Quadrant. Although all the details are yet to be finalized, we are hopeful that the move will take place in late May or early June of this year. No one enjoys moving, but I for one will be happy to return back to the center of campus, having now experienced being on the outer edge (with all the extra travel time this has involved walking to meetings, I have jokingly referred to our current

location as the Northwest Territories).

Otherwise, students and faculty in the department continue to distinguish themselves in their research and teaching activities (as highlighted in other parts of this newsletter). We have just been informed that Geography Graduate students have been awarded both a Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship and a Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship for the 2013-2014 academic year. These are highly competitive awards, given to only 15-20 individuals each year across the entire campus, so we are very proud of these accomplishment that demonstrate the quality students in our programs. Further, later this semester, the department will be pleased to help support the travel of eleven graduate students to present papers at the Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting in Los Angeles (in April). Finally, in closing I would like to announce that I will be ending my term as chair after the end of the summer, and Professor Changshan Wu will be taking up the chairship of the Geography Department in Fall 2013. As always, your continued support and interest are greatly appreciated!

## Upcoming Events:

- **Center for 21st Century Studies Symposium, "Contested Ecologies: The Perils and Promise of Transdisciplinarity".** The symposium, which includes faculty member Ryan Holfield will be held on April 5th from noon to 5.30 in Curtin 175.
- **Annual Meeting of the American Association of Geographers,** Los Angeles, April 9-13.
- **Geography Department Graduation Ceremony,** May 10

## Join us in our congratulations to:

- Isaac Park for receiving a UWM Distinguished Dissertation Fellowship
- Yui Hashimoto for receiving a UWM Distinguished Graduate Student Fellowship
- Nick Padilla for receiving a UWM Advanced Opportunity Program Fellowship

## Dedication to Judith Kenny

As of December 2012, the UWM Department of Geography has a new Professor Emerita. Judith Kenny, who served the department for over twenty years, retired from her faculty position and finished her move to Portland, Oregon, the site of her earlier career as an urban planner. Although we are sad to see Judith go, we are excited for her as she begins this new chapter – and delighted that she is continuing to carry on her research and teach her popular online courses in urban geography.



Judith's distinguished career at UWM began in 1990, when she joined the faculty as a freshly-minted PhD in geography from Syracuse University. Her early research focused on the cultural landscapes of the British Hill Stations in India, and one of the articles that came out of this research – "Climate, Race and Imperial Authority: The Symbolic Landscape of the British Hill Station in India," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*—has become a recognized classic in the discipline, included in a recent SAGE anthology bringing together "published work in human geography that represents what is best and most distinctive about the field."\* Her attention soon turned to the cultural geography of cities in the US; her research on Portland's comprehensive plan appeared in *Writing Worlds* (edited by Trevor Barnes and James Duncan), which remains one of the most respected and influential anthologies of poststructuralist cultural geography, and she has written or co-written numerous highly regarded articles on Milwaukee's landscapes of residential neighborhoods and downtown revitalization.

Judith has also been a leader within the department, not only chairing the department during the time when the current group of faculty took shape, but also chairing just

about every committee we have (sometimes more than one simultaneously!). Beyond the Department of Geography, she served on numerous high-profile committees and the Faculty Senate, in addition to putting in a term as Director of the Urban Studies Programs. And within the Association of American Geographers, she has chaired the Urban Geography specialty group and served on the board of the Cultural Geography Specialty Group, among many other roles.

Of course, many of the alumni reading this newsletter will best remember Judith as a favorite teacher and adviser. She has taught (and in many cases developed) a wide range of courses, including courses on urban geography, world regional geography, geographic thought and methods, geographies of race, and the geography of South Asia. As for advising and mentoring, we invited a few former advisees and colleagues to share their reflections. Their words remind us that among the greatest legacies of Judith's magnificent career will be the wisdom, guidance, patience, and humor she shared with her students and colleagues. Judith, we wish you the very best!

\*Gregory, Derek, and Castree, Noel, 2012. "Human Geography: An Introduction." In *Human Geography* (4 vols), SAGE Publications.

*We asked a few of Dr. Kenny's former doctoral students and colleagues to write a few words reflecting on their time with her. Below are some of their reflections.*

**Dr. Jeremia Njeru:** I owe Professor Judith Kenny a great deal for the training, support, and kindness she provided me as a Geography PhD student at UWM. Judith was instrumental in ensuring that I completed my PhD on time after I experienced a few setbacks. Judith, who was on my dissertation committee, took me under her wing and provided the guidance I needed to complete my dissertation. She challenged me to think critically as a young geographer and to take ownership of my research. I recall a meeting with her once to talk about my research. I had an impatience and frustration written across my face as she was going over my work with me. I think I said something like, "why don't you just tell me what to do, I will do it, and move on." She then gave me some crucial advice, which ended up being a major turning point in my disser-

## Dedication to Judith Kenny continued...

tation. I am now an Assistant Professor of Geography at West Virginia University. I owe much of my professional success to Judith. She worked with me to prepare for the job interview and associated job negotiations. Judith was, and is, however, more than an advisor to me. She is a great friend and a family member. Judith, her husband Professor Tom Hubka, and their pets Zack and Toby (RIP) hosted me countless times in their home for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Even though I left Milwaukee five years ago, I always look forward to the next time I meet or speak with her! Judith has my best wishes in her new life after her decorated academic career at UWM.

**Dr. Parama Roy:** For Judith: My teacher, PhD advisor, and most importantly my mentor and inspiration. Words can't express what your love and guidance mean to me. I still remember the time when everybody else seemed unsure and critical when I was about to make an important career and personal decision regarding changing jobs in 2010. Over a cup of coffee you had said, "Don't worry about how others will judge you. If you feel happy about your decision then it is the right decision for you." You made my decision so clear and simple. Your words of wisdom continue to guide me in difficult situations. Judith, saying thank you doesn't seem enough. I want you to know that you have made a huge difference in the way I have matured as a scholar and a human being.

**Dr. Deanna Schmidt:** First, congratulations to Judith in her new beginnings. Judith's research and teaching are about beginnings. She has fostered and supported turning the next corner, reaching for the next level, and meeting the next challenge in me and my colleagues. Second, many of us come to graduate studies with a profound desire to learn. Judith's geographical insights of urban development entranced me and brought me to a PhD in Geography. I remain grateful for the breadth of her knowledge. However, her greatest gift to me was the gift of teaching. Judith is the teacher's teacher, my friend and colleague, and mentor of future teachers.

**Dr. Chris Schroeder:** What sums up Judith Kenny's role in my life is her artful instruction. Judith and I met nearly a decade ago, and she became my advisor shortly thereafter. Her influence on my academic career has been im-

measurable. Like many graduate students, I've had to make some difficult decisions. Always open-minded and never dogmatic, Judith armed me with information, discussed the various sides to any problem, and helped me come up with my own decision. She has offered challenging arguments, numerous edits, cogent tips for the classroom, and commiseration over reviewers' comments. This style of didactics takes time and considerable thought, which has not gone unnoticed. In fact, she has instilled her approach in me—and doubtless many others. I could write at length of Judith's insight, inspiration, and enthusiasm. Yet what is more telling, in addition to her role as unflagging advisor, is she has also become a friend and confidante. Judith's retirement has been hard earned. Retirement, however, doesn't seem quite fitting, for I know she'll continue to contribute her talents to her research, the discipline, her community—and, well, to me.

**Dr. Anna Mansson McGinty:** Throughout my academic journey, I've been fortunate to have a few wonderful mentors who have generously guided me through scholarly debates with unwavering support. With a Ph.D. in Anthropology, starting a tenure track position as a joint faculty in Geography and Women's Studies I was straddling new terrain. Professor Judith Kenny has played a significant role in introducing me to the discipline of Geography. As a human and urban geographer she knew from where I was coming, and throughout our many conversations and meetings we have carved an interdisciplinary space where geographical, anthropological and feminist perspectives inform each other. Judith is a critical thinker, who has made important contributions to urban and political geography. She is a committed colleague, and this commitment was not only demonstrated through everyday department life and conversations in the hallway, but also when she chaired the Geography Department. Although Judith continues to be an active researcher in Oregon and she is only a Skype session away, I miss her dynamic presence in the department, our face to face conversations about research and life, the many lovely evenings when she and her husband Tom Hubka generously opened their house to faculty and students, and her quick-witted humor.

## Graduate Student News

### Katie Williams:

What if you could predict the future? Would you change anything?

That's the central question surrounding the Great Lakes Futures Project. The idea is to identify the major drivers of change in the Great Lakes Region – climate change, water levels, invasive species, governance and geopolitics, societal values, economy, chemical and biological contaminants. The next step in the process is to use that information to identify the two major axes of change (economy/environmental balance and human capacity for change) and develop narratives of how that future will look, depending on how the drivers of change play-out.



UWM participants in the Great Lakes Futures Project, Michael Timm, School of Freshwater Sciences and Katie Williams on the bluffs overlooking Lake Michigan, near Warnimont Beach

The idea, then, is to use knowledge of current and past conditions according to each of the drivers, where then it is possible to envision a future if change happens according to one of the defined scenarios. For example, if a future where there is good governance and the economy and environment is in balance, then you can write a story about what the region would look like in terms of environmental quality, quality of life and policy responses.

One of the key components of this effort is that one group of students develop the synthesis papers on each of the drivers and another group of students write the stories of potential changes. I am writing a scenario where we have an environment and economy out of balance, but a human capacity for change. The Great Lakes Futures Project Co-Chairs represent four of the members of the Transboundary Research University Network from McMaster University, SUNY-Buffalo, University of Michigan, and Western University. This transboundary effort is focused on developing cross-border cooperation and engaging a new gen-

eration of Great Lakes scholars, as well as providing policy recommendations to the US and Canadian governments and the International Joint Commission.

The scenario papers will be presented at a workshop at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario, in June 2013.

### Angie Jackson:

Since the fall, I have had the great opportunity to work as the teaching assistant on a mapping project that connects students in Geography 125 with the Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition (MRGC). The project was made possible by a Community-University Partnership Grant awarded to Professor Ryan Holifield and the Coalition's director, Ann Brummitt, by the Cultures and Community Program Office in the College of Letters and Science. This service-learning partnership was designed to engage students in applying environmental geography to facilitate the Coalition's meeting its own goals. The MRGC aims to restore and preserve urban wilderness and provide recreational opportunities by connecting multiple stakeholders in a comprehensive plan to include the various communities along the Milwaukee River.

Through the use of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology a group of five students and I gathered data along two soft surface trails, one running east of the Milwaukee river starting in Cambridge Woods and ending at the Locust Street bridge, and one west of the Milwaukee River starting at Gordon Park in the Riverwest neighborhood and ending at Capitol Drive. The data recorded in the field were brought into a geographic information system (GIS) where students collaborated on the design and production of trail maps. At the end of the semester, the students had the opportunity to present their final maps to the Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition board.



Angie Jackson (Teaching Assistant and project manager, UWM), Ben Everson (UWM), Alyssa Biersack (UWM), Chris Cooksey (UWM), Ann Brummitt (Director, Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition), David Rossiter (UWM) and Mary-Martha Kipcak (UWM)

## Graduate Student News

Overall, the first semester of the project was a success! I gained a greater appreciation for the effort involved in developing a greenway that serves a variety of purposes, including recreation and protecting wildlife habitat. By the end, students were able to identify and discuss the importance of sensitive landscapes and critical habitats along the river corridor through the use hands-on experience. One student enjoyed the field work and GIS application so much he decided to switch his undergraduate major to geography! We are continuing the mapping project this semester with a new group of students and a new set of trails.

### Claire Reuning:

Geographers often talk about local-global relationships and many of us in the department engage in research that operates at these scales. As part of my master's thesis, I've focused on how the Congolese in Milwaukee produce cultural landscapes. These are physical (e.g. an ethnic market) or conceptual (e.g. a ritual or tradition) constructs that form the boundaries around a group of people. Learning the theory behind these landscapes' production and then applying it in a research context has shown me how cultural landscapes reflect group values and needs. Understanding these theoretical processes has been useful at my internship in the refugee resettlement department at the International Institute of Wisconsin (IIW). Refugee resettlement is an excellent professional application of human geography theory.

IIW is 75 year-old nonprofit with deep roots in the Wisconsin's myriad cultural communities. As part of IIW's resettlement program, I've spent the last year spearheading a cultural orientation program for new Burmese refugees. I've learned to recognize how the ethnically diverse Burmese construct cultural landscapes, which I then use to design an effective program. Over eight weeks, we cover apartment living, health, personal finances, employment, and cultural adjustment. Developing a program that meets students' needs, the goals of the grant financing the program, and yet is flexible enough to adapt to our changing refugee caseload has been a challenge I've enjoyed embracing.

Over the last two years at UWM, I've learned that understanding the ways in which ethnic groups build their cultural landscapes and the values that these landscapes convey isn't just academic theory but can be applied to real world situations. As I prepare to graduate in the spring, I count myself lucky to have had the opportunity to get the best of the academic and professional worlds.

## Alumni News

### Andrea Hall (MS, 2010):

Greetings from Florida! I am currently in my second year of my PhD in the Environmental Science and Policy Program at the University of South Florida in Tampa, where I am also the Instructor for Environmental Science. I am currently studying stakeholder interactions in the development of ecotourism in a karst-based biosphere reserve in Chiapas, Mexico (Selva El Ocote Biosphere Reserve). My research is still evolving, but the main foci of my research lies in tourism and ecotourism in protected karst areas, local versus expert knowledge of the karst forest/landscape, and heritage studies (with an emphasis on the Latin American and Caribbean region). I plan on returning to Chiapas in April for fieldwork.

In addition, I am part of a research team that is developing karst education materials for the local educators and industry in and surrounding Selva El Ocote.



Andrea Hall (MS, 2010) at her fieldwork site at the Selva El Ocote Biosphere Reserve. This is the Sima de los Cotorras (Parrot's Abyss).

Working with my former advisor, Mick Day, I have recently published two papers, with a third paper that will hopefully be published later this year. Check them out!

Hall, A. and Day, M.J. (2011). Water as a focus for ecotourism in the karst of northern Puerto Rico. *Tourism and Karst Areas (Turismo e Paisagenes Carsticas)*. 4(1): 17-25.

Day, M.J. and Hall, A. (2012). On tourism in tropical karst. *Cave and Karst Sciences*. 39(3): 119-122.

Hall, A. and Day, M.J. (in review 2013). Ecotourism in the State Forest Karst of Puerto Rico. *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies*.

## Alumni news continued...

### Carrie Philpott (MA, 2012):

Upon graduation this past summer of 2012 with my MA in Geography and graduate certificate in Women's Studies, I began work as a case manager at The Cathedral Center, Inc. (CCI). CCI, located in downtown Milwaukee, is a nonsectarian agency serving women and families in Milwaukee who are experiencing homelessness, as well as women and families who may be facing a housing crisis. CCI provides emergency shelter to 32 individual women and eight families, as well as case management that focuses on health and needs assessment, engagement, and referrals to find the most appropriate housing placement for clients.

In my role as a case manager, I work with both single women in shelter and with single women in the community through community case management. For clients in shelter, I work with them on goals related to income, housing, and personal skills development and connect clients to other service providers who can assist them with their legal, educational, and other needs. For community case management, the goal is to meet clients in the community to help them access services so as to prevent a shelter stay or reduce the amount of time in shelter.

Through employment at The Cathedral Center, I have been able to continue my work with women in the Milwaukee community that I started with my MA thesis research concerning Latina immigrants, activism, and identity. My thesis research, along with my graduate studies and TA experience, has greatly supported my understanding of the numerous factors that contribute to homelessness and why women may experience a housing crisis. Specifically, I have a better understanding of Milwaukee as a place and the distinct obstacles women may face in Milwaukee.



I am extremely thankful for all of those in UWM Geography who supported me along the way. Aside from case management, I hope to incorporate my geography skills in helping to map homelessness and available resources in the near future. I am also pleased to call Milwaukee my new home. While I have gained confidence in my snow-driving abilities, I look forward to warm summer weather on the shores of Lake Michigan!

### Joel Dohm (BS, 2012):

I work for the Department of the Army (DoA) under the Department of Defense, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers, North Atlantic Division, Philadelphia. Within the local district, I work specifically in the Planning Division, Coastal as a Physical Scientist. I'm under a mobility contract for two years as a DoA Intern in which I start out at GS7 and will finish as GS11. During this two year time frame I am training on Hydrology, Hydraulics, Geotechnical, Civil, Ecological, Environmental, Economical, Regulatory, Structural, and Coastal practices within the Corps.



Joel Dohm (BS, 2012) in Cape May, NJ the day after Hurricane Sandy made landfall. The street sign next to Joel is usually 15 feet off the ground.

Ultimately, my goal is to work hand in hand with the Hydraulics and Hydrology (H&H) engineering branch, take the Fundamentals of Engineering exam, take the Principles and Practice of Engineering Exam, and earn the title of Professional Engineer (P.E.) within the Civil discipline. Fortunately, all of this is possible within the Army Corps as there are no constraints to what you can do, so long as you're willing to learn and follow the structures available. There's a multitude of training opportunities and my first two years are devoted to them in the Intern program. Once the two years expires, I'm at the will of the Corps. They have the ability to move me to any location within the Corps that's applicable to the job I've trained for.

Finally, this opportunity was a dream made true, as I recall seeing a dredging vessel in Humboldt Bay when I was stationed in California for the United States Coast Guard (USCG). That day when I saw the enormous boat move by, my sights were set on someday working with that group of engineers designated to keep public services functioning while reducing risks from disasters.

## Department news in brief

Much has been happening since our last newsletter! In November, we hosted UW-Madison geographer **Keith Woodward** as part of our West Lakes Speaker Series, and we also served as co-sponsors another highly successful GIS Day, featuring a keynote lecture from **Laxmi Ramasubramanian** (Hunter College), the President of the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science (video of the latter is available at the GIS Day web site: <http://www4.uwm.edu/gis/gisday/>).

Last December we continued our tradition of celebrating the holidays at SoLo Pizza on Oakland Avenue. We had a great turnout from geography graduate students, faculty members, staff, family, and friends – here are a few of us enjoying the pizza and good company:



Alison Donnelly and Lingling Liu enjoy the Department Holiday Party at Solo Pizza.

Congratulations to the eleven Fall Geography graduates!

This year, the department has two visiting scholars, Lingling Liu (Chinese Academy of Sciences) and Miao Li (Harbin Normal University) who are both doctoral students working on remote sensing. We are also happy to welcome back alumnus **Jonathan Hanes** (PhD, 2011), who has returned to UWM as a research analyst in the Office of Assessment and Institutional Research – and as our department's newest Adjunct Professor!

In February, Geography faculty members **Anna Mansson McGinty** and **Kristin Sziarto**, along with colleague **Caroline Seymour-Jorn** (Comparative Literature) (pictured below), led a very well-attended workshop on “Public Engagement, Community Collaboration, and Participatory Research” at the Center for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Studies. At the workshop, they discussed the rewards and challenges of working with community members and organizations as part of the ongoing Muslim Milwaukee Project.

On the same day, we welcomed **Richard Walker**, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geography at the Uni-



Participants in the C21 workshop: “Public Engagement, Community Collaboration, and Participatory Research” with Geography faculty Kristen Sziarto and Anna Mansson McGinty and Comparative Literature faculty Caroline Seymour-Jorn

versity of California-Berkeley, as our Spring 2013 Harold and Florence Mayer lecturer. We had a full house in the American Geographical Society Library for his lecture, “The Rise and Fall of the Golden State: Hard Lessons of Liberal Capitalism Learned in California.”

This spring, Professor **Mick Day** is once again teaching his popular tropical fieldwork course, this time returning to the western Cayo district in Belize to conduct a feasibility study of a proposed conservation corridor along Little Barton Creek, a karst-based tributary of the Belize River. Involving elements of both physical and human geography in a land-use/conservation planning context, the two weeks provided an immersive experience of the joys, rigors, and frustrations of tropical fieldwork in a developing country. Post-fieldwork analyses and writing are now being conducted, with an assessment of the corridor proposal due to stakeholders in May. Student participation costs were partially defrayed by much-appreciated awards from the Geography Department's Mary Jo Read Travel Fund.

We are proud to congratulate Assistant Professor **Woonsup Choi** and Associate Professor **Changshan Wu**, who received a grant from the UW Water Resources Institute for their project, “Impacts of climatic and land use changes on streamflow and water quality in the Milwaukee River basin.”

In March, Visiting Assistant Professor **Alison Donnelly** presented as part of the Yi-Fu Tuan lecture series at the UW-Madison Department of Geography. Her talk, ‘Timing is everything: especially for wildlife in a warmer world,’ explored the impact of climate warming on the phenology of interdependent species, such as the timing of arrival of migratory birds and availability of their caterpillar food source.

