

# Geography News

2005-2006

## Note from the Chair

Welcome to the 2006 issue of the Rutgers Geography Department newsletter. The past year has been filled with success for students, faculty and staff. However it has also been one of profound sadness due to the tragic loss of young Toby Schroeder. Toby, the son of Rick and Dorothy Hodgson and brother of Luke, unexpectedly passed away last December in Tanzania while on sabbatical with his family. Words cannot begin to convey the deep sorrow still felt by everyone within the department. I was profoundly touched by the generous outpouring of sympathy and assistance for the Schroeder family from all in the department and throughout the Rutgers community during their brief return to New Jersey in mid December. This was followed by numerous generous contributions to Flying Medical Service of Tanzania in Toby's name. The address of this worthy organization is found on page 2 of the newsletter, in case you still wish to make a contribution.

The department continues to attract superior students into our undergraduate and graduate programs. This fall we welcomed an excellent group of new graduate students, joining an exceptional cohort already in our midst. Congratulations to the 9 Ph.D., 2 masters and 29 undergraduate degree recipients this year.

On the undergraduate front, three extremely worthy students received this year's Andrew Hill Clark award that recognizes, what I like to call, our premiere renaissance undergraduates. This year's awardees, Alyssa Chesnut, Lorilynn O'Neil, and Aga Siemiginowska, were executive committee members of the Rutgers Undergraduate Geography Society (RUGS) and each completed a successful senior honors project. Under their leadership, RUGS had its

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*Dean Robert Goodman, Mark MaGrann, Dean Holly Smith, and Chair, Dave Robinson at this year's MaGrann Conference, "The Future of Disasters in a Globalizing World"*

## *The Future of Disasters in a Globalizing World*

The MaGrann Research Conference took place on a fine Spring weekend (April 21-22) at the Rutgers University Inn and Conference Center on the Douglass College campus. It was the third in the conference series that was begun in 2003 as the result of a generous donation by Mark MaGrann, a Rutgers Geography alumnus who went on to found a corporation that builds energy efficient housing. This year, additional support was also provided by the Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Deans of the Rutgers Faculty of Arts and Sciences and of Cook College as well as The Graduate School-New Brunswick.

The meeting was organized by Professor Robin Leichenko, Professor James K. Mitchell, and Ph.D. candidate Monalisa Chatterjee, with indispensable help from the Graduate Geography Project and Geography Department staff members Elaine Gordon, Michael Siegel, and Michelle Martel. Its theme, "The future of disasters in a globalizing world", attracted a diverse audience of hazards researchers, disaster professionals, students and Rutgers alumni who came together for lively discussions as well as formal paper presentations. They also shared an excellent dinner and luncheon in the Center's beautifully designed restaurant nestled among trees and shrubbery that were just coming into full bloom.

Floods, earthquakes and similar events are popularly viewed as difficult-to-predict hazards that remind humans they are not entirely masters of the terrestrial environment. One of the participants underlined this by repeating Will Durant's oft-quoted remark that "Civilization exists by geological consent, subject to change without notice." But the conference focused less on familiar age-old characterizations of disaster than on new features that are appearing as a consequence of globalization. The advent of a more interconnected world built around rapid transportation

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photo by Anne-Marie Campbell

## Note from the Chair

most successful year in recent memory. Thanks go to Roger Balm for his fine efforts this year as our undergraduate director.

Our new graduate director, Robin Leichenko, reports elsewhere in this issue how our students are making us proud. Much like her predecessor Rick, Robin is doing a wonderful job attracting new students and shepherding current ones through the program. They are winning external and internal funding, are participating in the AAG and other professional societies, and contributing to the department through their seminar series and every day presence in Lucy Stone Hall. They are also meeting with success in the job market. Under the leadership of Jessica Kelly, the Geography Graduate Project (GGP: formerly known as RAGGS) had a very good year.

Our faculty continue to be remarkably active. Their leadership and activities within the University and the discipline are impressive, and the level of scholarship exceptional. Special congratulations go to Ken Mitchell for his election to Fellow status in the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Elsewhere in the newsletter, you'll learn more concerning the goings on of many of us.

So too will you read about our very successful 3rd MaGrann conference, "The future of disasters in a globalizing world", that was held on campus in late April. We remain grateful to Mark MaGrann (RU Geography '71) for his generous support of the series. Along with the conference, we have just closed a semester that was replete with GGP seminars and department Brown Bag talks. The academic year came to a close with the annual spring luncheon for graduating students. This year we were pleased to have as our speaker Elise Bremer-Nei (RU Geography '93). Elise, current coordinator of the Safe Routes to School Program at the NJ Department of Transportation, regaled us with tales of her well-conceived, yet also rather serendipitous journey from college days to present. Another RU Geography success story!

This marks the first year of my third three-year term as department chair. Fortunately there has been a year or two of recess between each stint! I'm grateful to our students, faculty, staff and alumni for their contributions to the department and to our vibrant discipline. As always, special thanks to Elaine and Betty Ann for truly running the show. Our department is a shining beacon for what is right about U.S. higher education.

All the best,  
Dave

Contributions in memory of Toby Schroeder may be made to:  
Flying Medical Service  
1758 Manchester Blvd.  
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236-1920  
(A US address due to foreign banking issues)  
Learn more about this worthwhile effort by visiting:  
<http://www.flyingmedicalservice.org/english.htm>

## Rutgers Undergraduate Geography Society (RUGS)

A Year in Review by Aga Siemiginowska

Noelie Altito, whoever she may be, once said that "the shortest distance between two points is under construction," and construction was this year's unofficial theme for RUGS. It was a year of building, of rebuilding, and of paving our own ground which we hope that the class of 2007 will carry on.



Mike Schower, Jango Madon, Alyssa Chesnut, Kierran Sutherland, and Cricket O'Neil at the regional AAG Middle States meetings.

The year started off with a trip to the regional AAG's in Chata..., Chata..., Chatacooma?...Chaquanamia?...Chata-what?... .oooh right, Chautauqua. A place that seemed close enough for a road trip, and yet proved to be quite the adventure through rural New York and Pennsylvania....didn't we get lost or something? Do geographers get lost? Hmm, I think we prefer the term explore. Well the trip proved to be quite the introduction into the geography conference world, and soon we decided that it was time to move onto bigger and brighter things (and places that we could pronounce) like Chicago!

We arrived at the conference as naïve little geographers, and after the first day we had learned our lesson...conferences were just like school, except even more intense! All of us somehow managed to sit through the whole day of talks, and understandably we all crashed at 4 pm. Oh, but wait, being the young geographers that we are, not only did we crash, but we crashed while watching the National Geographic channel until we decided to go to bed at 10pm.

One of the more memorable experiences at the AAG's, at least for me, was the geography bowl. Alyssa had proven her mighty geo-skills at Chautauqua earlier in the year and was guaranteed a spot on the Middle States Team.



## Graduate Geography Project (GGP)

A Year in Review by Jessica Kelly

Jango, Nick, and I decided to form our own team, with some kids from Kentucky and George Mason. It was an intense game, and I think we held our own for a while, especially with Kierran and Erica cheering everyone on.



*Nick DeStefano-Blum, Alyssa Chesnut, and Aga Siemiginowska*

Besides our travels, RUGS got involved with some charity work this year. We found a story on the BBC about a mobile library in Kenya which services nomadic tribes. The books are delivered via camels that travel from place to place with books on their backs. We decided that the library needs some more camels in order to deliver books to more nomadic children. Thanks to the amazing treasuring powers of Cricket, we managed to get a meal-swipe plan approved by the RCGA. This meal swipe, in conjunction with a fundraising event at the Olive Branch bar raised over \$2600 for the Camel Library. This money will be hand delivered to the organizer of the library by Professor Monica Nyamwange, an alumni of the geography department who currently runs a study abroad program to Kenya.

This year has been an amazing year for RUGS and all its members. We became close friends and shared incredible experiences. A special thanks needs to go out to Alyssa Chesnut, Cricket O'Neil, Nick DeStefano-Blum, and Jango Madon, members of the e-board who did an incredible job and without whom RUGS would not have stayed afloat. The faculty and staff of the department, especially Professor Robinson and Professor Balm need to be thanked as well. They know just when to push us in order to make RUGS better. Next year's RUGS is being taken over by Nick, Sam, and Brian. Hopefully, they will find many more members, pull the treasuring strings the right way, have an incredible time, and remember that the whole year is always about construction and about making it what you want it to be.

What a great year for GGP! The energy from the new cohort of graduate students has powered the many great events we've been able to host. After a rocky (or rainy) start to Orientation at Jenny Jump State Forest, our group is going strong. This year we welcomed Dr. Paul Gottlieb, Dr. Rob Neff, Dr. Ines Miyares, Dr. Susanna Hecht, and Dr. Michael Curry as part of the annual Speaker Series lectures. These great lectures could not have been made possible without Alexis Buckley. Thanks for your service! We look forward to the great lectures Alexis will coordinate for next year's series. Monthly seminars, featuring the work of Rutgers graduate students, have been wonderful for building our community. Thank you to all the participants and organizers. In addition, graduate students are actively disseminating their work to the wider regional and national audiences with full participation in AAG Middle States in Chautauqua, NY and the national AAG conference in Chicago, IL. Let's not forget how social we may be! GGP hosted our "Night at the Pub" event at Miller's Pub in Chicago. Faculty, students, alumni, and friends came together for food, drink, and most importantly, lots of laughs. Finally, we are so pleased at the many personal and professional successes and triumphs that so many graduate students have enjoyed this year. We celebrate you! In the end, it has been a pleasure to serve as President of GGP. I'd like to extend a special thanks to Za Barron, Treasurer and backbone of the organization. Thanks for your work! On behalf of all the officers: myself, Adam Pine, Za Barron, and Bradley Wilson, we wish GGP all the best, as we turn over the reigns to Maeve Pinto, President; Adam Pine, Vice President; Peter Vancura, Treasurer; and Margo Andrews, Secretary.

We look forward to all your plans for next year!



*Maeve Pinto, Peter Vancura, Bradley Wilson, Kevin St. Martin, Alexis Buckley, and Monalisa Chatterjee talking after a brownbag talk about research in the Gulf of Maine.*

## Note from the Undergraduate Program Director

The Undergraduate Program in Geography continues strong, topping out this year with near-80 majors. The only downside comes around this time (May) when we have to say goodbye to so many graduating seniors (almost 30 this year) that we have come to know. Many already have job prospects lined up, while some others are going on to graduate studies here in the US or overseas. There has been much in the media lately about the relative benefits of a liberal arts major versus a more specialized major

such as business. The word on the street about the equal or greater career value of a liberal arts degree has surprised many people, but it has not surprised us here in Geography where a broad-based liberal arts program combines with a strong set of taught skills including GIS, cartography, and remote-sensing. Those leaving us this year will be going on to do good work in a world that increasingly values what Rutgers geography students know. We wish them every success.

- Roger Balm

## Faculty News

Roger Balm writes: The summer of 2006 will be hot and buggy as I will be away for six weeks on an Institute fellowship in Central America sponsored by the Community College Humanities Association and funded



*Classic-period (AD 250-900) Maya sculpture from Yaxchilan, Mexico (now in the British Museum, London). Sketch by Roger Balm*

by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The itinerary takes in many of the important Maya archaeological sites in Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and Belize as rural areas where contemporary Maya culture remains strong. I will be traveling with 24 other Institute members. It's a busy schedule but I'm hoping there will be time to add to my folder of drawings from Palenque (Mexico) and Copan (Honduras) and start some new work at Tikal (Guatemala). My research topic for the Institute is "Disinterment and the Geographic Imagination in Mesoamerica."

David Hughes writes: My book "From Enslavement to Environmentalism: Politics on a Southern African Frontier" was finally published in April. All told, the process of research design, fieldwork, writing, and publication will have taken 12 years, or slightly less than

a third of my life. And they say the military runs on a "hurry-up-and-wait" principle!

Meanwhile, I am deep into a second book, tentatively entitled "Whites, Water, and Conservation: Landscapes of Belonging in Zimbabwe." The research concerns various categories of white Zimbabweans and how, in the course of seeking to belong in Africa, they made a powerful set of conservation ethics. They also made a lasting racial posture: of avoiding engagements with Africans in favor of engagements with the land. In an almost conscious fashion, whites have sought to belong to African landscapes rather than to African societies. Thus, environmentalism, soil conservation, and (oddly) dam-building emerged and persist as forms of social escapism. Ultimately, I hope to establish the (white) cultural basis for conservation as a way towards refounding it on a more post-colonial footing. The fieldwork has been fascinating, taking me to a particular white farming community (where I spent much of the 2002-2003 year while based with my family in Harare) and to visit Zimbabwean environmentalist writers in South Africa, the UK, and Spain. During trips in 2004 and 2005, I sniffed around Zambia as well, visiting displaced Zimbabwean whites. I'll do the same and give a talk in Nairobi in May and, time permitting, pop down to Arusha to visit Rick and Do.

Robert M. Hordon has been asked by the Executive Director of the American Institute of Hydrology (AIH) to serve on the Executive Committee for another 2-year term. The AIH was formed in 1981 as a non-profit scientific and educational organization. It is the only nationwide organization that offers certification to professionals in all fields of hydrology. All members have to be re-certified every 5 years by submitting evidence to the AIH of professional activity such as publications, presenting papers at professional meetings,



*Robert Hordon received the President's award from the NJ American Water Resources Association*



service on water-related committees at the local, state, and national level, classes taught in the hydrology area, and other associated activities.

Robin Leichenko writes: In July 2005, I took over the job of Graduate Director from Rick Schroeder. This transition was relatively easy because Rick left our graduate program in great shape following his three-year tenure. This year has been an exceptionally positive one for the grad program. Several of our new PhDs have recently started or are soon to start new jobs either in the academy (Mark Pendras - University of Washington, Tacoma; Julie Silva -University of Florida; Alex Standish - Western Connecticut State University) or in the federal government (Adam Diamond - USDA). Julie Silva also won the Best Dissertation Award from the Economic Geography Specialty group of the AAG. Our current students are also having terrific success with external funding (Jessica Kelly - NSF dissertation research award, Bradley Wilson - Fulbright) and internal awards (Ben Neimark - Bevier Fellowship, Gwangyong Choi - Dissertation Teaching Award, Stella Capoccia and Patricia Alvarez - pre-dissertation travel awards).

In terms of my own research, much of this year has been devoted to working on a book manuscript with Karen O'Brien from the University of Oslo, Norway. The book, titled *Double Exposure: Globalization and Global Environmental Change*, examines how processes of global change interact to produce uneven outcomes across regions, communities, individuals, and social groups. The book is under contract with Oxford University Press and we are aiming for a 2007 publication date. Karen and I presented a paper based on the book at the MaGrann Conference in April. My other major research task has entailed work with William Solecki at Hunter College-CUNY on the topic of suburbanization and environmental change. Our article titled "Urbanization and the Metropolitan Environment: Lessons from New York and Shanghai" appeared in the May 2006 issue of *Environment* magazine. Bill and I also presented a paper on metropolitan form and hazard vulnerability at the MaGrann Conference.

This year Ken Mitchell has been working mainly on theoretical and public policy dimensions of recent natural disasters. Among others these include Delaware River floods during 2004-5, the South Asian tsunami of December 2004 and hurricane Katrina (August 2005). On a warm Spring evening last May he delivered the Henry Rutgers lecture on "Tangshan, terrorism and tsunamis: Searching for security in the aftermath of sudden catastrophes" to an audience of about 100 colleagues, alumni and students in the Rutgers Student's Center. Later he was appointed to the New Jersey Governor's Task Force

on Flood Mitigation which subsequently put together a far-reaching set of recommendations for changes to existing policy that is due to be published within the next few weeks. More recently, together with Robin Leichenko and Monalisa Chatterjee, he organized the Geography Department's Third Annual MaGrann Research Conference. This project is intended to provide insights and guidelines for how to address new kinds of globalized risks and hazards. As a long-time advocate of a state atlas, Ken also joined other DOG members on the Advisory Council of the Atlas of New Jersey that has been established by Rutgers University Press to bring this project to fruition. Finally, in May 2006 Ken was a panelist at the 16th Annual Assembly of the Regional Plan Association in a New York session chaired by RU alumnus Bill Solecki (Ph.D. 1990) that discussed the growing vulnerability of the greater metropolitan region to coastal hazards.



*Ken Mitchell was elected as an AAAS Fellow*

Among other publications Ken has contributed a policy essay to the Social Science Research Council's project on hurricane Katrina <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/> and a longer piece on proposed reforms of the US disaster management system: "The primacy of partnership: Scoping a new national disaster recovery policy," in "Winds of Change: Repairing the national emergency management system after Katrina." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 604(1): 228-255. The latter volume is being used by members of Congress as a reference to support proposed reforms of existing public policies. Also appearing during the year were "A century of natural disasters in a state of changing vulnerability," *New Jersey's Environments: Past, Present, and Future*. Neil Maher, Ed. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press: 164-198, and "Urban disasters as indicators of global environmental change: Assessing functional varieties of urban vulnerability," *Earth System Science in the Anthropocene*. Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 2005: 135-152.

In the Fall of 2005 Ken was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) for contributions to research and policy in the field of environmental hazards.

Frank Popper writes: In April I went to San Antonio to attend the annual meeting of the American Planning Association. It was my last meeting as an APA board member, and I also introduced several sessions and took part in one on "Design Strategies for Shrinking Cities." I remain on the boards of the Frontier Education Center, which is about to be renamed the National Center for Frontier Communities, and of the Great Plains Restoration Council, where I am now board chair. In the fall I and my wife Deborah Popper, Rutgers geography MA 1987 and PhD 1992, will again teach as visiting professors in the Environmental Studies program at Princeton University. We have forthcoming publications in the "Journal of the West" and in Rutherford Platt's edited collection, "The Humane Metropolis."

Joanna Regulska writes: My wonderful 2005-06 sabbatical year was largely spent in Amsterdam and Utrecht, and since then I have been "slowly" returning to the reality of teaching, research and administrative duties. Some of my earlier research activities have come to fruition this year. A volume co-edited with Jasmina Lukic (Serbia and Hungary) and Darja Zavirsek (Slovenia), "Women and Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe" will be coming out in September 2006 from Ashgate Publishers. The NSF collaborative project (with Polish and Czech colleagues), "Constructing Supranational Political Spaces: the European Union, Eastern Enlargement, and



*Joanna Regulska has been named Director of International Programs*

Women's Agency" that examines the way in which women construct political spaces beyond the nation-state at the supranational level (using the example of the European Union and of the eastern enlargement) is also completed; a book length manuscript based on that research is under preparation. And Bonnie Smith (RU-History) and I are working on an edited collection of papers drawn from two

conferences collectively titled "From Cold War to EU: Women and Gender in Contemporary Europe", the first held here at Rutgers in October 2004 and the second held in Szczecin, Poland in August 2005, both funded by the Delegation of the European Commission to the United States.

Otherwise life has been "quiet", with a few trips to Tbilisi, Georgia where I am working with a wonderful group of faculty to expand the MA program in Gender Studies. I am also co-PI along with Ziva Galili (RU-History) of a three year collaborative project with Kazan State University (Kazan, Russia) focused on faculty and curriculum development in areas of gender studies, nationalism, and ethnicity and federalism. And I continue as chair of the Women's and Gender Studies Department.

On a more personal note, my daughter Annemarie and her husband live in China where they teach English, my stepdaughter Rachel is an undergraduate at the University of Denver and Ethan, my stepson is in California in high school... and Michael is commuting on a regular basis between LA and NJ.

Dave Robinson writes: It is hard to believe that it has been 18 years since I arrived on the Banks. The time has flown. In most respects, this is a good thing, as it confirms that I enjoy most of what is involved with being a professor and member of this department. This past year was no exception, as I continued my involvement with teaching, research and administration.

The Global Snow Lab continues to be supported through a series of research grants and remains a component of the National Climatic Data Center's Applied Research Center. We continue to provide present and historic snow data to colleagues around the world, and this year I participated in preparing the forthcoming Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) assessment (<http://climate.rutgers.edu/snowcover>). Last spring found me in Beijing, attending the first International Climate and Cryosphere conference and giving a special lecture at the China Meteorological Administration. I have also begun chairing my second National Academies committee, this one addressing issues associated with the stewardship of all of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) environmental datasets. I also sit on the American Meteorological Society's Applied Climatology committee, NOAA's Integrated Surface Observing System advisory committee, and was recently appointed to the steering committee of the forthcoming National Integrated Drought Information System.

New Jersey's weather and climate was a proverbial

roller coaster ride this past year. I actually testified at a public drought hearing during the October week when 10" of rain fell across the state! The NJ Weather and Climate Network (<http://climate.rutgers.edu/njwxnet>) continues to mature, but deep pockets for support of this endeavor remain to be located. Aside from the network, the state climate office maintains an active web presence (<http://climate.rutgers.edu/stateclim>), each day filling multiple requests for information. I also sit on a number of state environmental committees and working groups.

As you likely have noticed earlier in this newsletter, this past July, I once again assumed the duties of department chair. With this came the renewal of responsibilities that remained familiar to me from my recent six years at the helm. Obligations that I take seriously and at times even enjoy! Unfortunately, these duties necessitate a reduction in my teaching load, and that is perhaps what I most regret. Still, 2005 found me teaching my favorite climate course and a graduate seminar on the climate of the past 20,000 years.

Laura Schneider writes: My first year at Rutgers has been productive and quite exciting; figuring out how to balance research and teaching has been challenging and rewarding. During the summer I participated in two very interesting workshops: the first was the Economics of Invasive Species Workshop held in Annapolis, VA, by the Northeastern Agricultural and Resource Economics Association's. I presented a paper on the implications of bracken fern invasion on land abandonment in southern Yucatán, and the paper will be published in the next April issue of *Agricultural Resources Economic Review*. The second workshop I participated in was the first social science workshop held by the Long Term Ecological Research Program (LTER-NSF). Social scientists working in LTER sites (I was representing the Hubbard Brook-New Hampshire site) gathered to produce a document to describe ways to engage the social sciences with LTER network-level science and synthesis. Finally last October, I attended and presented a paper at the Open Science Meeting of the Human Dimension of Global Environmental Change Program in Bonn, Germany in the session: Understanding Biodiversity. One of the highlights of the meeting was the transformation of the land use-cover change program (LUCC) into the new Global Land Project (GLP); this program will provide a network of collaborators and funding resources to those who are interested in land change science. To continue my research in Mexico on invasive species, together with researchers at Clark University, we were granted funds from the NASA Land use-land cover change program. This is the 3rd phase

of the project and one of the major objectives is to study how fire regimes in the region are linked to plant invasions.

At a personal level, my son Lucas joined me this Fall. He had been in Caracas for 2 years. He is enjoying being back in the USA and having new friends in Highland Park.

Rick Schroeder writes: I am just finishing up a year in Tanzania where I have been studying South Africa's new role as the undisputed political and economic power in the Africa region. This research, which has been funded by a Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad fellowship, focuses on what is a fairly controversial subject from the standpoint of most Tanzanians. Tanzania was once one of the staunchest of front-line states opposed to apartheid. To have so many of the country's major economic assets taken over by South African firms, as has happened over the past decade, strikes many as a cruel irony.

One specific angle I've been following recently has to do with a rare gemstone called "tanzanite". The bluish-purple stone was actually named by Tiffany's as part of a marketing ploy to underscore the fact that tanzanite is only mined in Tanzania. Today, thousands of local artisanal miners vie for control of the tiny eight square kilometer mining enclave with a giant South African mining company called Tanzanite One. There has been a good deal of violence at the mine including numerous incidents in which artisanal miners have had dogs set on them, or been shot, by Tanzanite One's South African security force after allegedly trespassing on the claim controlled by the company. And the mine has surfaced often in the new government's published goal of revising agreements with mining companies to enhance the benefits received by Tanzanian citizens. I've been interviewing company representatives, small-scale miners and legal representatives on all sides of the conflict, to piece together the historical geography of the site and analyze contemporary zoning politics apparently geared toward securing the best sources of tanzanite for the international firm.

This part of the research has been especially interesting because it links up directly with my prior work in the area of political ecology. I've also been following racial dynamics, especially the tension within the white expatriate community engendered by the arrival of neo-settlers from the South; rugby - a bastion of South African national identity, even this far afield on the continent; Tanzania's neo-liberal economic policies (under which South African firms are warmly welcomed); and a half dozen specific controversies surrounding particular South African corporate entries into the Tanzanian economy. Our year ends in June 2006, at which point I'll return to the US to resume teaching and begin working on



a book tentatively titled “The Great Trek to Tanzania: South African Capital, Race and National Sovereignty in Post-Apartheid Africa.”

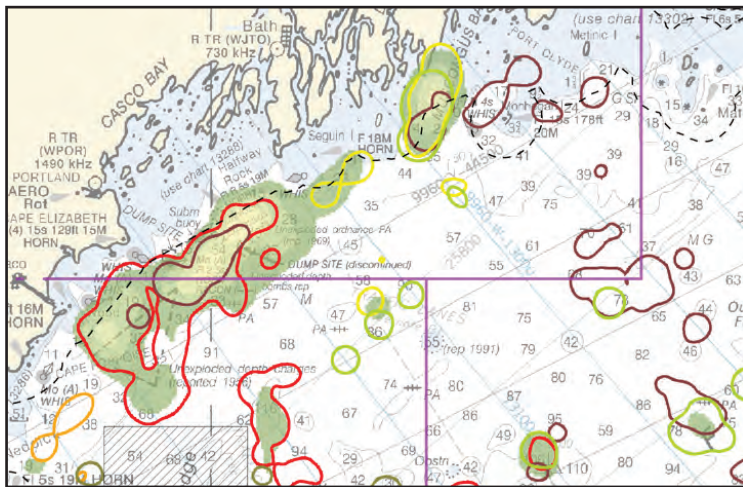
Kevin St. Martin writes: Over the last year I have been fortunate enough to work with very supportive colleagues and graduate students, devote time to several research projects, and even get to travel a bit as an invited speaker to the University of Arizona and Duke University.

My memory of the last year is, however, dominated by what seems like an entire summer spent in the computer lab analyzing data and printing large format maps for a project I am working on with Madeleine Hall-Arber (MIT) and, now, Alexis Buckley (Graduate student in Geography). The “Atlas Project” is an ongoing project funded by NOAA that attempts to broaden the representation of both fishing communities and fishers themselves through a participatory re-mapping of the fisheries of the Northeast. This project asks fishers to respond to a series of maps (3 maps per interview, 6 interviews per research site,

fishers’) environmental knowledge into fisheries science and management. The project is moving through its second year and we will soon be summarizing findings for presentation (ICES conference this summer in Galway!) and publication. A summary article that talks about this project and related was recently submitted to the International Journal of Global Environmental Issues for inclusion in a special issue on the “future of fisheries.”

My work related to critical cartographies and GIS continues as well. Research done by our former graduate student, John Wing (now working on his Phd in history at Minnesota), and myself on the “discourse of GIS” has been incorporated into an article that he and I have recently submitted to Progress in Human Geography. Also, I presented a paper on counter-mapping and economic subjectivity at the Indigenous Cartography and Representational Politics conference in March.

Peter Wacker writes: I have finished ten chapters in a manuscript dealing with New Jersey's built environment through 1820 or so. I have decided to do something on place names. Maybe a full chapter - otherwise, except for rewrite, it's done. I finished a rather long report for the NJ State Museum for an exhibit planned there. Consulted on an exhibit that recently opened at the NJ Historical Society. I have been elected President of the NJ Exonomia Society and have begun to write "popular" pieces on numismatics and the influence of history and Geography. Also, I am co-editor of the NJ atlas project.





of certified fiber for their recent mandate of 80% certified fiber in all publications, and this summer they were awarded FSC certification for chain-of-custody and controlled wood in addition to receiving FSC certified resource manager status. I'm also working away at completing my dissertation and plan to wrap it up by Fall 2006.

Za Barron had a productive fall, finishing up her course work and presenting at the Middle States AAG conference in western NY. The paper she presented, titled "Beyond Green Capitalism: Providing an alternative discourse for the environmental movement and natural resource management", is forthcoming in the Middle States Geographer. Za has passed her comprehensive exams and will be leaving for Maryland in the spring to begin her field work on livelihood strategies and resource management related to more mushrooms.

In 2005, Gwangyong Choi went to the Association of American Geographers meeting in Denver, CO (April), the American Geophysical Union meeting in San Francisco, CA (December), and the Korea Meteorological Administration in Seoul, South Korea (August). He made presentations about several climatological topics, including potential linkages between the Northern Hemispheric spring snow and atmospheric circulation, and the impacts of bioclimatic extremes on mortality in South Korea. Also, he contributed several papers in 2005 and 2006 to the Korean Geographical Society and the Korean Preventive Medicine Society. He is working on his ongoing dissertation project, "Recent spring onset in the Northern Hemisphere". In 2006, he received an AAG Dissertation Grant (\$400) and a Dissertation Teaching Award from Rutgers University. Gwangyong greatly appreciates all the support he has received from faculty and graduate

students in the Department of Geography at Rutgers University.

Rosana Grafals writes: This year 2005-2006 I taught a class for the first time ever. The material was mostly new to me and in the process of constantly attempting to find new ways to open the students' minds to new perspectives, I was exposed to diverse geographical ideas I had not thought about before. So, this teaching experience was very enriching to me and hopefully to the students too. I am looking forward to keep improving my creativity and teaching skills. I gave a presentation at the AAG's which has been the starting point of the ideas for my dissertation proposal, which I am starting up this current semester and I'm planning to defend in the fall of 2006. Every time I get a chance I go home, so I spent winter break and spring break in Puerto Rico and took advantage of the beach to make some observations for my research topic and, of course, have some fun!

Marilyn Guidry writes: During the past academic year, I have been working part-time on dissertation coursework and teaching full time at Cheyney University of Pennsylvania. In my position at Cheyney University, I received grant support during the past year from two sources, the Penn-Cheyney Export Center for \$10,000 for a pilot study to analyze fresh food availability in a Philadelphia neighborhood and a grant from UPS Foundation for \$35,000 to expand this study to additional neighborhoods. I intend to pursue additional funding to support dissertation research in this area. I was granted tenure at Cheyney University in December 2005 after five probationary years in the Department of Social and Behavioral Sciences. I am responsible for promotion and advising for a B.S. in Geographic Information Science.

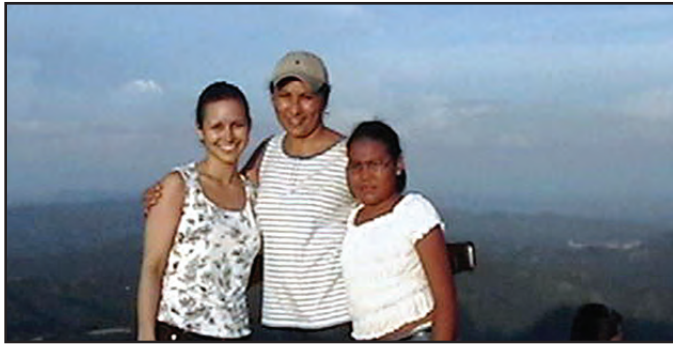
With funding from UPS during the Summer 2006, I will be supervising a group of Cheyney University undergraduate GIS students to collect, process and analyze food availability data using GPS and GIS technology.

Danielle Hartman writes: In my non-academic work, I am developing GIS applications with a program called Tatuk GIS. This toolkit is an alternative to ESRI products which offers advantages in deployment speed as well as price. I've placed a very simple example using Census data at <http://www.comcarto.com/scripts/usa.dll>. You choose a variable and create thematic maps by county. If anyone is interested in developing custom GIS applications, I'd love to hear from you. More on the right-brain side of my job, I have recently completed a map of the Middle East called "Holyland Unfettered". This is a topographic map without any political borders. It can be seen at <http://www.brotherspublishing.org>.



*Gwangyong with his advisor Professor David Robinson at the awards reception in the Zimmerli Art Museum.*

Jessica Kelly writes: Thanks to the generous funds from the Graduate School and from Princeton University's Office of Population Research, I spent half of my summer in El Salvador on a pre-dissertation reconnaissance trip.



*Jessica with Carolina Lopez and Liliana Canizales on top of Puerta del Diablo*

When I wasn't feasting on pupusas, dancing salsa and cumbia, and sunning on the beautiful black sand beaches, I managed to select my research sites in three distinct regions of the country, to make affiliation with several geographers and sociologists at Universidad Centroamericana "Jose Simeon Canas" in San Salvador, and to finalize my dissertation proposal. I am very pleased to report that I passed the qualifying exams in October with significantly less anxiety than anticipated thanks to Tom, Bonnie, Kevin, and Laura for their support. Currently, I am enjoying personal and academic enrichment from fellow seminar participants in the Institute for Research on Women's Annual Seminar-Thinking About Gender: Diasporas and Migrations. Also, I have had many opportunities for interaction with some extraordinary Rutgers undergraduates this year through collaboration with RUGS members, teaching Space, Place, and Location and Intro to Geography, and interaction with Aresty Research Center.

Alex Standish writes: My job is a geography/social studies position at W Connecticut State University. I will be teaching classes in geography and in time supervising trainee social studies teachers. W Connecticut is a smallish university that teaches to masters level in the city of Danbury, 50 miles north of NYC. I will be relocating with my family to start work in late August.

Adam Steinberg is recovering from his whirlwind first year of grad school and revising his paper on the renovation and reuse of the John Rolfe House in New Brunswick. He hopes to submit the paper for publication during the spring.

Claudia Villegas writes: I am writing on the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN), an indigenous rebellion who began an armed confrontation against the government in México, my home country, in January of 1994, and along the years have become a major national social struggle fighting by means of political and peaceful resistance for the constitutional recognition of the indigenous peoples rights. My dissertation looks into EZLN's claiming that human beings may have a space for dignity. I am discussing Lefebvre's notion of a revolutionary space to inquiry for the possibilities of such a proposal, for now materialized in two alternative territorial and government structures the zapatistas inaugurated in August 2003 within their own rebel territory in Chiapas: the so-called Snails and the Councils for Good Government. So, I am interested in keeping my focus on political geography, cultural studies and Marxist-inspired approaches on globalization, social movements and resistance.

Bradley Wilson, a Ph.D. Candidate in Geography was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship to study the history and geography of rural farming cooperatives in Nicaragua that participate in Fair Trade Certified coffee markets. He will begin his project in September 2006 at the start of the coffee harvest. For 12 months he will conduct a comparative study of three marketing cooperatives and their members in the Central Highlands region of Matagalpa and Jinotega focusing on land-based histories, gendered land tenure, costs of production, income distribution, the division of labor, collective action, and inter-/extra-institutional relationships among cooperative members. The goal of the study is to better understand the social and spatial barriers that limit or support small farmer participation in Fair Trade Certified coffee markets.

## Undergraduate Student News

Charlton Herczegh writes: I'll be graduating in a couple weeks. I worked on the Cook Student Organic farm last summer and this year I'm going to farm it up again before I head out to do an SCA (Student Conservation Association) internship in the winter. During the semester I worked for the Plant Science department in their greenhouse and lab doing plant research. I was nominated for a national herbal society scholarship this past semester as well.

Aga Siemiginowska writes: This summer I will be in DC working for National Geographic, in their research division. I'm not exactly sure what that entails yet, but I hope to find out soon. In September I plan on traveling to Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, Italy, Switzerland, and France, including some hiking in the Alps. In October I start an MSc program at Oxford in Nature, Society, and Environmental Policy.

## Alumni News

Gail Carter writes: Still working at the Division of Science, Research, and Technology at the NJDEP. Current research is combining current GIS interpolation methods with modern spatio-temporal geostatistics for mapping. I am actively involved with the NJ Academy of Science, which is the state affiliate of the AAAS. Both science students and professionals should consider becoming a member of the NJ Academy. It is the sole "umbrella" professional science organization in the state, and provides independent representation for the broad scientific community on socially challenging issues -- such as intelligent design, stem cell research, use of dissection in the classroom, etc. In addition, it provides a relaxed setting where industry, academic, government, and other scientists can network. I encourage everyone to visit the website [www.njas.org](http://www.njas.org).

The US Air Force Academy has promoted Dr. Steven Gordon (RU Geography '93) to Associate Professor.

Peter Wacker reports that: Judy Monte, who works for the State Department has almost entirely recovered from her auto accident last year. She has been on several map collection trips recently including Trinidad & Tobago, Dominican Republic, southern Brazil, Algeria

*visit our alumni directory: [http://geography.rutgers.edu/people/students\\_alumni.html](http://geography.rutgers.edu/people/students_alumni.html)*

and London. One of Judy's professors at Rutgers was Bob Muller, who left us to take a position at LSU. I will always miss Bob but at least I get a holiday letter from him. He reports on the horrible devastation along the Gulf Coast, but he and Baton Rouge are fine.

Karen Nichols writes: I just wanted to share the news: Ben and I have had our first child -- Sophia Nicole Lotto (b. 6/15/05). We think she's the cutest baby in Poughkeepsie! I've made a bit of a career shift and am now teaching history/geography at a local independent/private school. I'm also still involved in the local sustainable farming movement here in the Mid-Hudson Valley.

Mark Shimshak (M.A. Rutgers, 1970) has been employed as a Human Resources Specialist at the Social Security Administration. He and his wife of 30 years (Betty) have done much traveling over the years, finding their island paradise in Anguilla, which they vacation to each summer.

James (Jim) Wiley continues in his position as Associate Professor of Geography at Hofstra University. He continues his research interest in the plight of small island developing states as they encounter the processes of globalization within a neoliberal framework.

## MaGrann Conference (continued from page 1)



photo by Michelle Martel

and communications networks has increased the human capacity to create new risks, amplify old ones and modify social vulnerabilities. We are changing the context of the places in which risks are experienced as well as the risks themselves.

During the day and a half long conference, fourteen speakers provided examples of the cascading effects that are produced by disasters in the globalizing world and explored their implications. Papers authored by geographers (7) and sociologists (4) dominated the formal presentations, but there were also contributions from engineering (3), psychology (2), history, architecture and planning. Authors were drawn from the United States, Canada, Norway, New Zealand and Japan. They included

a mixture of senior figures in the field of hazard and disaster studies as well as mid-career researchers and young scholars pursuing the Ph.D.

The meeting kicked off with an authoritative presentation by Craig Colten (Louisiana State University) that compared the experience of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans (2005) with that of Hurricane Betsy forty years earlier, and it concluded with a prescient examination by Henry Quarantelli (University of Delaware) of "Trans-system ruptures", a new class of disasters that is coming into being in the wake of contemporary globalization. Sandwiched in between were papers that addressed the intersections of disasters with animal welfare, the handicapped, public water supply systems,



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# Geography Department News

Newsletter of the Rutgers Geography Department

tourism, international trade, national sovereignty, urbanization and other aspects of public policy that are all to one degree or another being changed by economic, political and cultural forces of globalization.

The rich variety of topics and the range of discussions that ensured will now be converted into conference proceedings and one or more special issues of professional journals so that the fruits of our deliberations can be widely shared with scholars and policy makers around the world. Stay tuned!

*For more details on the conference see: <http://geography.rutgers.edu/>*

## Mapping NJ: An Evolving Landscape

The enthusiastic response to the Encyclopedia of New Jersey was the catalyst for this volume. An advisory board of experts, including several Rutgers Geographers, has been assembled to help guide this new endeavor. Peter Wacker and Maxine Lurie are the co-editors. Mike Siegel is the cartographer for the project.

*More information about the NJ Atlas project may be found here:  
<http://mapmaker.rutgers.edu/MappingNJ/>*

Information for the newsletter should be sent to the editor, Mike Siegel <[misiegel@rci.rutgers.edu](mailto:misiegel@rci.rutgers.edu)>

Rutgers University invites you to join in supporting the work of the Department of Geography.

Please send your contribution to the Department of Geography, payable to the Rutgers University Foundation, and marked for the Geography Department.

Thank you to these contributors

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**An expanded online version of this newsletter may be found here: <http://geography.rutgers.edu>**