

geography news

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY AT CLARK UNIVERSITY



WHERE'S YOUR WORLD? SEPTEMBER, 2011



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september 2011



above photo by Yelena Finegold
cover photo by Colin Polsky

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welcome back!

Greetings from Director Tony Bebbington



Tony Bebbington (left) with Distinguished University Professor Emerita Susan Hanson (right) at the National Geographic Society alumni reception in Washington D.C. Photo by Jeanne Moddermann © Clark University 2011.

As we start the academic year, this newsletter is a reminder of some of the really remarkable things going on in our department. For those of you just arriving at Clark, I hope the contents affirm your decision; for those who have chosen Geography majors, I hope these articles convince you what a good decision that was and will continue to be; for those of you returning for another year, the interviews here will remind you why you are coming back; and for those of you who are now Geography alums, I hope the newsletter will persuade you that we continue to thrive and take good care of the patrimony with which we have been entrusted.

So what is inside these few pages? In the interviews with Yelena Finegold and Holly Jones you will see just how far our majors' experiences go beyond the classroom and the lab, and involve them in serious field research that is demanding in every sense: analytically, politically, physically and intellectually. There is a reason why a significant part of Clark's Liberal Education and Effective Practice (LEEP) initiative is so informed by Geography – many of LEEP's formative ideas have been honed through the experiences of our students and professors. Meanwhile, James McCarthy's article comes from a leading scholar in our discipline last year who chose to move to Clark Geography, a testament to the exciting work going on here. Indeed even while last year's National Research Council assessment of Geography departments concluded that ours was one of the absolutely very best in the US, as far as I can tell we keep raising our own bar. Over the last two years, our sixteen or so faculty have landed twenty new grants, worth over \$6 million and in all cases opening research opportunities either for our majors or our PhD students, and in many cases for both. This would be a remarkable achievement anywhere, but at a liberal arts college it is genuinely stunning – and this is said by someone who largely shies away from hyperbole.

These are exciting times at Clark Geography, notwithstanding our less than auspicious national and international context. So this year we invite you to take advantage of the opportunities here, to participate in them where you are able, and to join us in trying to build something that we hope will change both our discipline and the world it studies.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A. J. Bebbington".

Anthony Bebbington, Director and Professor:
The Graduate School of Geography, Clark University

the geography of the internet

The Graduate School of Geography at Clark University has discovered that there's a world wide web out there, and we're putting ourselves on its map. Over the summer we created a brand new Facebook page, where you can find postings of upcoming events, and updates on our latest news. We also have a Picasa web album, where we'll showcase the photos from these events to keep you in the loop. It's virtually geographical!

- » if you like us, find us on [Facebook](#), and
- » if you want to see our recent photos, find us on [Picasa](#).

*see you
there!*

2011 PETER CONDAKES SUMMER RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

The Condakos Fellowship provides a stipend of \$1,000 for an undergraduate Geography or GES major to work as a summer research assistant with a Geography faculty member. The fellowship is made possible by a generous gift from Peter Condakos, an alumnus and Geography major from the class of 1978. This year, we had two recipients of the fellowship: Yelena Finegold, who worked with Professor Gil Pontius, and Holly Jones, who worked with Professor Jody Emel. We asked each student five questions about their summer research: *What does your research involve? How did your experience at Clark prepare you for your research? What do you find exciting about your field of study? What do you expect to learn? How do you expect to use what you learn back at Clark U?* *Read what they had to say:*

[holly jones]

1. I'm working with Dr. Emel to identify the location of each step in the life of beef cattle, from the farm where they were born, to where they were grain-fattened, to where they were slaughtered, before they end up at a major Boston grocery chain and finally the consumer's kitchen. We've been focusing on the two biggest chains in the city, Shaws/Star Market and Stop & Shop, and comparing their supply chains with that of Whole Foods, a smaller chain, but a leader in local and transparent purchasing.

2. Whether it was negotiating with Paul Wykes to get a list of Clark's investments or reading feminist sci-fi, at Clark I have truly learned that knowledge is power. Which explains why nobody wants to talk to me about beef! Being at Clark has made me passionate about democratizing information, which helps me get excited about reading dry industry reports, and lends me the gumption to press tight-lipped business people for information.

3. Connection is the golden word when it comes to research about the environment and particularly consumption. Consumers are usually very alienated from food production, and never more so than with commodity meat, which frequently doesn't have a brand, much less a story. But what we eat has enormous social justice, animal-welfare, and environmental repercussions. Commodity-chain analysis means exploring where beef comes from, and what it's like there. The responsibility at each link in the chain is clearer once we know the story, not least our responsibility as consumers!

4. Right now the Holy Grail for me and Dr. Emel is understanding the pressure points on the supply chain. We want to know about green-house gas emissions, animal welfare, and other environmental considerations along the supply chains, but equally important to understanding spatial/geographical differences is understanding how the chains have changed over time. It's important to me, too, that the information we're collecting can be used strategically to make changes in real life.

5. I've already become more involved in Clark's food policies because of the research I'm doing. I've been talking with Heather Vaillette, the general manager of Clark's food service, about starting to track Clark's meat consumption in the fall, and I've also volunteered to help organize a Food Day at Clark, which will be part of a nation-wide "push for healthy, fair and sustainable food in America." I'm also excited about organizing and connecting campaigns at Clark to develop a general purchasing policy which would promote human rights, environmental justice, and animal welfare, addressing everything from food to clothing in the campus store to the radios used by police and EMS. Stay tuned!



Above: Holly Jones pals around with a food-themed carnival cutout.

>> story continued on page 5 >>

[yelena finegold]

- 1. I spent my summer at Iracambi Atlantic Rainforest Research Center in Brazil as a GIS intern. My primary research project was developing the mining monitoring project. Brazil's largest aluminum producer has open-pit bauxite (the mineral used to make aluminum) mines in neighboring communities and Iracambi has been using GIS to monitor the mining activities and protect threatened areas. I used maps from the Brazilian government and mining company to map buffer zones around streams and forests to monitor the active bauxite mining sites. The mining company is not permitted to mine the bauxite within 30 meters of streams and needs extensive licenses for deforestation. My research involved snooping around the mining sites to make sure parts of the forest hadn't mysteriously disappeared and collect GPS points to validate the satellite images.
- 2. My classes that integrated GIS into the curriculum and support from professors prepared me for my research in the Atlantic Rainforest. Classes at Clark such as Losing Ground: Land Change Since the 19th Century and Living in the Material World ignited my interest in deforestation. Additionally, in Research Design in Geography, I designed a proposal about validating maps in the Atlantic Rainforest, which assisted me in grant applications.
- 3. Participatory-GIS, hands down. Part of my mining project involved overlaying the community-mapping project with the mining data. The community-mapping project involved using a map drawn by children in the community to go door-to-door identifying the owners of each household and taking GPS points to make a new, accurate community map. We presented the new community map, which included satellite imagery, labels for each house, corresponding photographs, and labels for significant land uses, such as coffee and forest. The map is empowering for community members, providing spatial information and a sense of ownership of their land.
- 4. At Iracambi I have greatly improved my GIS skills through real world application. I have gained an understanding of what deforestation really looks like; 93% of the Atlantic Rainforest has been deforested while the remaining 7% is extremely fragmented. There is a great amount of labor required for reforestation, which I have learned after working in the nursery transplanting seedlings, making soil, and planting small trees. I have also learned about the biodiversity of Brazil and fauna and flora identification skills (like how to ID the Brazilian Wandering Spider, the most venomous spider in the world).



Above: Yelena Finegold poses at the peak of Graminha, 1,800 meters high

- 5. I will use my experiences at Iracambi to inspire future research projects at Clark. I want to look further into the effectiveness of "Payment for Environmental Services," which was a focus at Iracambi to encourage conservation and reforestation. Additionally, I plan to do 5th year in GIS, where I will build on my GIS skills and focus on environmental concerns.. I also plan to keep up my gardening skills from the nursery at Iracambi by joining the Clark community garden.



Undergrad Clarkies: How can you become involved in this summer research fellowship? If you're a current undergraduate Sophomore or Junior majoring in Geography or in Global Environmental Studies, you can start by talking to a geography professor and asking if he or she is interested in working with you on a research project next summer (2012). We begin announcing this opportunity in the spring semester, so you have plenty of time to start brainstorming.



...what in the world ?

taking a closer look:

Geography professor John Rogan suggested we take a closer look at this mysterious photo. This is an image taken from space of a burned forest in the Yucatán Peninsula in Mexico. The white strips are the ash residue from trees that were knocked down three years ago by Hurricane Dean and then burned in a fire in May 2011. According to John Rogan, the “Chanchen” fire ignited in a nearby cattle pasture, and was spread by winds to the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve, killing sixty percent of standing trees, with flame heights exceeding ten meters.” [Photo credit: [Digital Globe](#). Panchromatic half-meter resolution image.]

John Rogan specializes in landscape ecology, fire ecology, remote sensing, and GIS. One of his most popular courses is [The Geography of Fire](#) at the School of Geography. If you have any images you would like to include in the next issue, please email: geography@clarku.edu.



It is a pleasure and an honor to be joining the Graduate School of Geography. My professional and research interests have long centered on human-environment relationships, and particularly on the relationships between the political economy of capitalist societies and how those societies use and transform the environment. There is no better place to continue that work than Clark, given its historical strength and ongoing leadership in those areas. I am extremely excited about the opportunity to work with the many outstanding colleagues and students at Clark who share these interests. I am equally excited about joining an institution that combines the best elements of a liberal arts college and a major research university.

Joining Clark is an exciting new step professionally, but it is also a return for me: my interest in environmental issues and human use and transformation of the environment was born and nurtured while growing up in New England, and I look forward to being able to bring my familiarity with the landscape into some of my courses. I grew up in Massachusetts and did my undergraduate work at Dartmouth College, where my concentration in Environmental Studies included time abroad in Kenya and formative experiences with environmental NGOs and at UNEP headquarters. I spent several years in the environmental NGO field after graduation, including work with a national conservation organization in Washington, DC, during the period when the environmental justice critique of mainstream environmentalism was bursting onto the scene. I remain deeply interested in the history, forms, and effects of the American environmental movement. My interest in the root causes of

environmental problems led me back into academia, and specifically to a master's and Ph.D. in geography from the University of California at Berkeley. My time at Berkeley had two major outcomes: an enduring fascination with the productive landscapes of the rural West, including their welter of property claims and oddly central place in American thinking about the environment, and an effort to make the familiar strange – in my case, to approach domestic environmental politics and actors, and particularly contestations of state and environmental claims on productive rural landscapes, through the lens of what was known at the time as 'third world' political ecology (an approach pioneered and developed very largely at Berkeley and Clark).

I joined the geography department at Penn State in 2000. My research during those years remained focused at first on the subject of my dissertation, the Wise Use movement, and then turned towards one of the less adversarial offshoots of its politics, a desire to promote community forestry initiatives in North America. That research took me to Canada for comparative cases, and deepened my appreciation for the global networks through which environmental governance forms and travels. It also led

me to theorize more explicitly the pervasive but not always obvious ways in which neoliberal ideas were permeating and reshaping environmental policy, including in the 'trade and environment' realm. That stream of empirical and theoretical work led to the co-edited volume *Neoliberal Environments: False Promises, Unnatural Consequences* (Routledge, 2007). I have also published my work in many journals in geography and beyond, and worked with the Ford Foundation on community forestry and working landscapes, Oxfam on 'scarcity' of natural resources, and other organizations.

My wife and I have two young daughters, and I hope to spend weekends introducing them to hiking, kayaking, urban wanderings, and the other joys of New England, as time permits.

This fall, James McCarthy is teaching *Culture, Place and the Environment* in the School of Geography.

“my interest in environmental issues, and human use and transformation of the environment was born and nurtured while growing up in new england ... i look forward to being able to bring my familiarity with the landscape into some of my courses.”

BEHIND THE SCENES: student workers

The Graduate School of Geography at Clark University consists of a diverse community of faculty, staff, and students. Our student workers are an important part of this community, as they assist us in daily tasks and projects that are integral to the program's ability to run smoothly. In this issue, we're highlighting one of our newest student workers, Brittany Murphy, a junior at Clark U. Here's what she has to say:



Above: Brittany Murphy and her friend, Copper the Alpaca [shown wearing sunglasses]

Name: Brittany Murphy

Job: Program Assistant, Work Study Student

Year of Graduation: 2013

What I like most about my job: Working with my supervisors and getting to know the ins and outs of the Geography Department.

Special Skills: Advanced coffee making, professional plant watering, expert photo copying, unparalleled telephone-answering abilities.

Hometown: Gilford, New Hampshire

Favorite Geography Course I've Taken: *Weather and Climate* with Professor Chris Williams.

Interests: Skiing, boating (on Lake Winnepesaukee, of course), and travelling.

Specialized Research: This year I am working with Psychology Professor Abbie Goldberg on her research of diverse families. The research is a longitudinal study that explores the transition to adoptive parenthood among a diverse group of

couples, including same sex and heterosexual couples.

What I hope to do after I graduate: After graduating with my Bachelor's, I'll apply for graduate school and pursue a doctoral degree. I'm interested in working towards a career that involves family or trauma therapy, especially with soldiers.



GEOGRAPHY a unique place

This summer, an article in *The Chronicle* titled "[Doing Research With Undergraduates](#)" examined the understated and often overlooked benefits of undergraduate research, both for students and for faculty. It's no surprise that the author, James M. Lang, was inspired to research his article after attending a talk by Associate Dean of Undergraduate Research and Active Pedagogy, and Associate Professor of Geography **Colin Polsky** about the HERO program at Clark University. This year, Colin finished his last summer as the Director of Human-Environment Regional Observatory (HERO). Colin has worked passionately to make HERO a unique place for undergrads to conduct hands-on research, typically with a focus on land-use and land-cover change. Now Colin will be incorporating that hands-on approach to undergraduate education into Clark University's implementation of Liberal Education and Effective Practice (LEEP). LEEP is a new model of liberal education, the goal of which is to apply "knowledge and skills to issues of consequence and by emerging membership in larger communities of scholarship or practice," as stated in the [LEEP Framing Document](#). The Graduate School of Geography has long believed in the importance of collaborative, expeditionary learning, and offers exceptional undergraduate courses that provide this practical, hands-on experience. We're thrilled about the university's implementation of this unique model of liberal education for undergrads, and are excited and hopeful for the changes to come.

2011:FACULTY

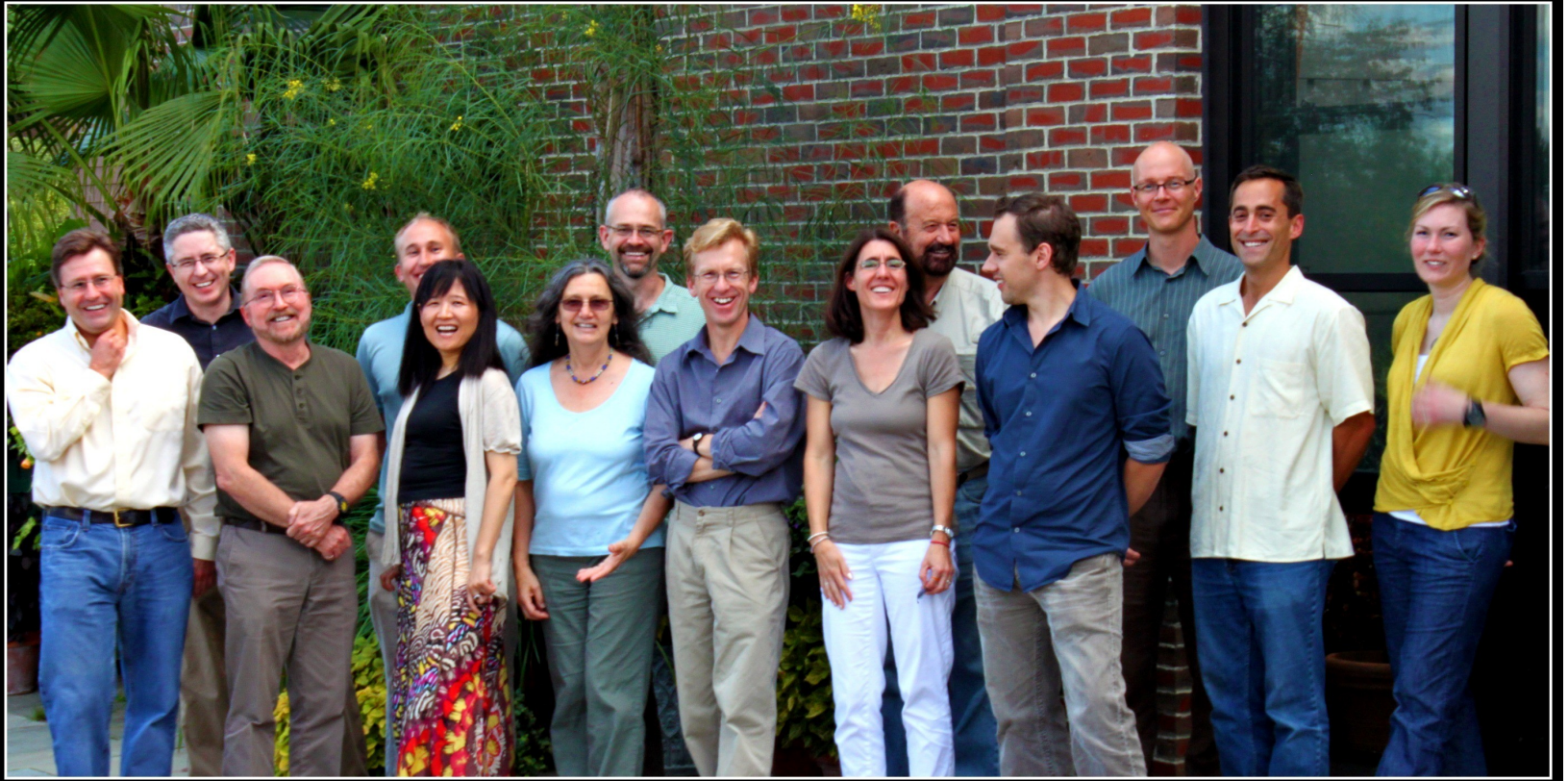


Photo taken at Tower Hill Botanic Garden in Boylston, MA. From left, **Back Row:** John Rogan, Kris Kuzera, James McCarthy, Dick Peet, Dominik Kulakowski, **Front Row:** Jim Murphy, Ron Eastman, Yuko Aoyama, Dianne Rocheleau, Tony Bebbington, Deb Martin, Mark Davidson, Colin Polsky, Karen Frey, **Not Pictured:** Jody Emel, Marco Millones, Gil Pontius, Sam Ratick, Chris Williams

2011 grants, awards & achievements

[click on the text to follow links to more information]

Yuko Aoyama has been awarded a \$269,999 National Science Foundation grant for support of the project entitled "The Global Shift in R&D Alliances: Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) and the Quest for the Base-of-the-Pyramid (BOP) Markets."

Richard Peet has been appointed as the Leo L.'36 and Joan Kraft Laskoff Professor of Economics, Technology and Environment.

Clark Labs, which is chaired by Professor **Ron Eastman**, is the recipient of a two-year, \$1.8 million grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to develop a decision support software application for land management.

Anthony Bebbington has been awarded a \$200,000 Ford Foundation grant for his project entitled "Extractive Industry, Decentralization and Development."

Colin Polsky is the Clark director of a four-year, multi-institutional collaborative project entitled "Homogenization of Urban America: Becoming a Single Shade of Green?" which was awarded \$2.7 million in funding from the National Science Foundation, \$195,997 of which will go to Clark University.

Karen Frey has received funding from the National Science Foundation in support of three separate collaborative research projects of which she is the primary investigator. "Pacific-Arctic Carbon Synthesis-Transformations, Fluxes, and Budgets" received \$102,573; "Toward a Circumarctic Lakes Observation Network (CALON)" received \$94,433; and "The Polaris Project II: Amplifying the Impact" received \$92,922.

Gil Pontius and **Yuko Aoyama** were promoted to Full Professor, and **Jim Murphy** was promoted to Associate Professor.

In Memoriam

We solemnly remember the recent loss of our friends and colleagues of the Graduate School of Geography, and respectfully pay tribute to each of them for their contributions to the school, as well as to the world of geography. Each of them will be truly missed, and we extend our deepest sympathies to their families.

Martin Koeppel

December 21, 2009

Martin Koeppel was born in Munich, Germany. He passed away on December 21, 2009 after a battle with cancer. Martin studied visual and media arts, environmental design, urbanism and philosophy in Germany and the United States, and received his Ph.D. in Geography from Clark University in 1987. His doctoral research examined the relationships between language mediated and visual-aesthetic reasoning in a children's multimedia-based neighborhood planning project. Martin was a media and environmental artist, a communications designer, and a professor of Media Arts and Environmental Education at The College of the Atlantic. He held exhibitions in Germany, the United States, England, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, and Romania.

James V. Lyons

March 5, 1948–June 4, 2011

James V. Lyons was born in Lafayette, Indiana. He earned a master's degree in Education and in Geography from the State University of New York, New Paltz and Binghamton, and earned a Ph.D. in Geography from Clark University. Jim was a professor of Earth Sciences at Worcester State University, and taught courses in Physical Geography, Geology, Meteorology, Climatology, Oceanography, New England Landscape, Geological Hazards, Planetary Geology, and Earth History. His research involved glaciology and volcanology. Known for his eclecticism, Jim also played a variety of instruments, including the guitar, banjo, mandolin, and hammer dulcimer. He passed away on June 4, 2011 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Jim left behind a wife of 27 years, Helga M. (Hau) Lyons, as well as two sons, two brothers, and three sisters.

Linda Lee Van Zandt Turner

August 27, 1948–May 18, 2011

Linda Turner was born in Austin Texas. She received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with Honors from the University of Texas in 1973. Linda suffered from myotonic dystrophy, and leaves behind her high school sweetheart and husband of forty-three years, Billie Lee Turner II, as well as her son, Billie and her daughter, Kelly. B.L. Turner II served as the Director of Clark University's Graduate School of Geography from 1983-1988, 1997-1998, and 2004-2008. He is currently the Gilbert F. White Professor of Environment and Society at the School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning of Arizona State University, and a Research Professor for the School of Geography at Clark U.

jēōgrāfē@clarkū



Anthony Bebbington | Yanacocha Gold Mine | Cajamarca, Peru