

Geography Department News

Monthly Newsletter
Royal Holloway, University of London

April/May 2009
Number 185

STAFF AND STUDENTS

Ed Derbyshire has been accorded the title of Goodwill Ambassador of the International Year of Planet Earth 2007-2009.

Scott Elias served as the external examiner ('Opponent' in the Swedish academic system) for Fredrik Olsson, a PhD student in Quaternary science at Kalmar University, Sweden.

Peter French acted as external examiner in the Geography Department, Portsmouth University for a PhD thesis entitled 'Sediment budget analysis and integrated shoreline management planning: An application to Ghana's coast.'

Mary Dengler received a Letter of Commendation from college for her submission to the Teaching Prizes.

Steven Pawley has taken up a position at The Alberta Geological Survey in Canada and left the Department on the 8th of May.

Barbara Silva left the Department and has taken up a position at Natural England.

Congratulations to **Ruth Payne** who completed her PhD on 31st March. The title of her Thesis was 'Child-Headed Households in Zambia: From Concepts to Realities'. Her supervisors were **David Simon** and **Katie Willis** and the examiners were Dr Gareth Jones from LSE and Dr Lorraine Van Blerk from Reading University.

Welcome to **Andre Reyes Novaes**, visiting Lecturer from Brazil, who will be with the Department until January 2010.

Welcome to **Laura Basell** who will be working with Jim Rose as Postdoctoral Researcher as part of the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain Project which is Leverhulme funded and will be with the Department for 3 months.

Alex Loftus was an external examiner for the PhD of Julie Smith, Rhodes University, South Africa

Philip Crang, Felix Driver and Helen Scalway co-organised a conference on Fashioning Diasporas, at the Sackler Centre of the V&A, May 15th-16th. Organised as part of the AHRC funded Fashioning Diaspora Space project, the conference featured presentations from: Sonia Ashmore (V&A); Sarah Cheang (London College of Fashion); Claire Dwyer (Geography, UCL) and Liaqat Rasul (Ghulam Sakina); Jonathan Faiers (Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts London); Andrew Godley (Management, Reading University); Susan Kaiser (Textiles, University of California, Davis) and Leslie Rabine (Women's Studies, University of California, Davis); Lara Kriegel (History, Florida International University); Susanne Kuechler (Anthropology, UCL); Giorgio Riello (History, Warwick University); Susan Roberts (Bridging Arts); Robert Ross (African Studies, Leiden University); Helen Scalway (Geography, RHUL); Emma Tarlo (Anthropology, Goldsmiths); Carol Tulloch (V&A and University of the Arts London); Sophie Woodward (Arts and Design, Nottingham Trent University).

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NOTICES

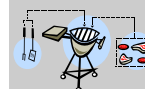
➤ Graduation Ceremony - Geography
- Monday 13th July at 4:30pm

➤ QUISS Seminar - Mark Ruddy,
RHUL - The Shape of things past:
Aspects of the Evolution of the Water
Vole *Arvicola* - 3rd June at 5pm,
room 136.

➤ Departmental Seminar - Peder
Roberts, Stanford University - 'Heroes
for the nation and experts for the
state: how science shaped Antarctica,
1920-1939' - 4th June at 1pm, Room
136.

🎉 School Taster Day - 2nd
July.

End of Term - 12th June 2009



- Department BBQ
for Finalists - 9th June at 5.30pm.



Science Faculty
Summer Party
4pm - 6pm, Thursday 18th June
2009, Senior Common Room

Helen Scalway held an exhibition on 'Moving Patterns' in the Pavilion of the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), from May 7th to 21st. Organised as part of the AHRC funded 'Fashioning Diaspora Space' research project, the exhibition considered how pattern and ornament are laden with meaning and memory, within the diaspora spaces connecting Britain and South Asia. Helen's own drawing work explored the moving patterns both of contemporary Newham and of the heart of imperial London in South Kensington. Works from guest artists were also featured: Samar Abbas, Jagmohan Bangani, Nagat El-Mahi, Nilesh Mistry, Anjana Patel, Sumi Perera and Punam Sharma. Further details on the exhibition can be found on Helen Scalway's artist's blog on the V&A website:

www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/microsites/1750_scalway/blog.



OUTSIDE ENGAGEMENTS

Clive Gamble gave a lecture to the World University Network on April 27th on the topic Social technologies and social brains: 150 years of scientific Palaeolithic Research.

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting of the Management and Finance Committee at the Geological Society, London, on 1 April.

Ed Derbyshire was the after-dinner speaker at the 60th anniversary of the granting of the Charter of the University College of North Staffordshire (now University of Keele) as part of the Keele Alumni meeting, on 18 and 19 April, of the first graduates (or

"pioneers of the pioneers" - first decade 1950-1960).

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting of the Council of the Geological Society, London, on 22 April.

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting of the Science Committee at the Geological Society, London, on 27 April.

Ed Derbyshire attended a meeting of the Natural Sciences Committee of the UK National Commission for UNESCO at the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining in London on 20 May.

Ed Derbyshire chaired a meeting of the External Relations Committee of the Geological Society in London on 27 May.

Mustafa Dikeç participated in a workshop organised partly around his book *Badlands of the Republic*. He gave a seminar on the first day of the workshop, and, on the second, discussed his book with postgraduates and members of staff. The event was organised and hosted by the Department of Culture, Aesthetics and Media, Gothenburg University, Sweden, 7-8 May 2009.

Tim Cresswell gave a series of four talks in Taiwan during late April. He was a guest of Taiwan's National Science Foundation, who paid for the trip. He spoke at the National University of Taiwan's Taipei, Taitung and Dong Hwa campuses during a ten day trip.

Tim Cresswell gave the opening keynote address to the Ontario Research Council on Leisure meeting in Ottawa, Canada on April 30th. His talk was titled, *Locating History* at Maxwell Street, Chicago.

PUBLICATIONS

Elias, S. A., 2009. 'Advances in Quaternary Entomology', Elsevier, in press.

Thomsen, P.F., Elias, S., Gilbert, M.T.P., Haile, J., Munch, K., Kuzmina, S., Froese, D., Sher, A.,

Holdaway, R., and Willerslev, E., 2009 Non-destructive sampling of ancient insect DNA. *PLoS ONE* 4(4): e5048. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0005048.

Elias, S. A., Webster, L., Amer, M., 2009. A Beetle's Eye View of London from the Mesolithic to Late Bronze Age. *Geological Journal*, in press.

Kleine, D. (2009), The ideology behind the technologies - Chilean microentrepreneurs and public ICT policies, *Geoforum*, Vol 40. 171-183

Felix Driver, 'Geography and drawing together', preface to Helen Scalway et al, *Moving Patterns: Fashioning Diaspora Space* (exhibition catalogue, 2009)

Helen Scalway et al, *Moving Patterns: Fashioning Diaspora Space* (exhibition catalogue, 2009), 36pp

Loftus, A., 2009, 'Intervening in the Environment of the Everyday', *Geoforum*, 40: 3, pp326-324

Loftus, A., 2009, 'The Theses on Feuerbach as a Political Ecology of the Possible', *Area*, 41: 2, pp 157-166

Ekers, M., Loftus, A., Mann, G., 2009, 'Gramsci Lives!' Introductory editorial to theme issue of *Geoforum on Gramscian Political Ecologies*.

Stevens, T., Lu, H., 2009. Optical dating as a tool for calculating sedimentation rates in Chinese loess: comparisons to grain-size records. *Sedimentology* 56, 911-934.

Reviews, Abstracts & Conference Reports

Felix Driver, Review of N. Etherington (ed.), *Mapping Colonial Conquest: Australia and Southern Africa*, in *The Great Circle: Journal of the Australian Association for Maritime History*, 30 (2008), 107-9.

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Kleine, D. : ICT4What - Using the Choice Framework to Operationalise the Capability Approach to Development, Proceedings of the IEEE/ACM ICTD2009 Conference.

GRANTS AND AWARDS

Katie Willis, was awarded this year's Gill Memorial Award from the RGS/IBG. This is awarded for 'the encouragement of young researchers who have shown great potential.'

Varyl Thorndycraft won one of this year's College Teaching Prizes for 'Google-Earth, Virtual Fieldwork and Quantitative Methods in Physical Geography.'

Katherine Brickell has been given two small grants to support her postdoctoral research: \$4k from the Association of Southeast Asian Studies of the UK for work on 'Gender, labour and domestic life in Luang Prabang', and £2,980 from the RGS/IBG's 20th International Geographical Conference Fund for her project on 'Home dissolution and family change: gendered experiences of separation and divorce in rural Cambodia'.

Dorothea Kleine's paper, "ICT4What - Using the Choice Framework to Operationalise the Capability Approach to Development" was awarded an "Honourable Mention" (runner-up to Best Paper) at the international "ICTD - ICT for Development Conference in Doha, Qatar, April 17-19

Clive Gamble received the Henry Stopes Medal from the Geologists' Association on May 1st. The award is for work on 'The prehistory of Man and his geological environment' and is awarded every three years.

The Department has won two British Academy Postdoctoral Fellowships. They are for Amanda Rogers (whom we will be delighted to welcome back!) for her work on 'Geographies of Transnational Theatrical Creativity' (to be mentored by

Phil Crang), and Sara Fregonese (Univ of Manchester) to work on 'The Urbicide of Beirut: Geographical perspectives on war and cities' (to be mentored by Klaus Dodds). They are due to start in September.

Alex Loftus and Farhana Sultana (Syracuse University) have been awarded 10,000 USD from Syracuse University to organise a workshop on The Right to Water.

VISITORS-MEETINGS IN THE DEPARTMENT

Rafida Nawaz, University of Multan presented the Departmental Seminar on 2nd April. The title of her presentation was 'Pakistan: Contemporary Geopolitics'.

Nina Hansen and Tom Postmes from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands visited the Department on May 11th to explore possible institutional collaboration with Royal Holloway. They will also presented a seminar on "The One Laptop per Child Initiative in Ethiopia: psychological, social and cultural change".

Prof Deirdre Coleman (Robert Wallace Professor of English at Melbourne) visited the UK to conduct research on natural history and sociability in the romantic era, and during her stay was a visitor in the Department, hosted by Felix Driver. She presented a seminar to the London Group of Historical Geographers, chaired by David Lambert, and visited a number of archives with Starr Douglas, who completed her PhD in the Dept in 2004.

FIELDWORK- CONFERENCES- OVERSEAS

The GG3077 ICT4D students gave their final year presentations in Microsoft's offices in central London on 14th April, and then received a briefing on DFID's ICT4D activities by Anuradha Bajaj (Advisor, Financial Sector Team) and Xavier Lecacheur

(Senior Private Sector Advisor, Policy and Research Department), focusing especially on branchless banking.

ICT2009 Doha, 17th-19th April 2009

Members of the ICT4D Collective and CEDAR played an active role in ICTD2009 in Doha, 17th-19th April 2009: Dorothea Kleine (Honourable Mention) and David Hollow were among the 19 selected paper presenters; Uduak Okon was selected to give one of 27 poster presentations; David Hollow was joint convenor of the workshop on 'What makes good ICTD research'; Dorothea Kleine gave a demo on 'Understanding the Provenance of Ethically Produced Goods'; Marije Geldof, Paolo Brunello and Ugo Vallauri presented position papers at the Young Researchers Workshop; and Tim Unwin was a commentator on the papers contributed to the Young Researchers Workshop, and also served as one of the Senior Program Committee members for the Conference as a whole. The Collective was one of two groups invited to make presentations in support of their bids to host the next ICTD conference.



European Geosciences Union 2009, Vienna 23rd April 2009: Varyl Thorndycraft and colleagues from the University of Liverpool (N. MacDonald & R. Chiverrell) convened the session Flooding and climate during the last two millennia. The session was sponsored by the British Hydrological Society (£500) and British Society for Geomorphology/Earth Surface Processes and Landforms (Blackwell-Wiley) (£500). Invited

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speakers included Prof. Stuart Lane (Durham), Prof Tony Brown (Southampton) & Prof. Rudolf Brazdil (Brno).

EGU 2009, 23rd April 2009. **Varyl Thorndycraft** gave an invited talk entitled The innovative use of Google Earth and virtual fieldwork in teaching physical geography as a contribution to the session New, original and successful ideas for teaching on Earth Sciences.

EGU 2009, 23rd April 2009. **Varyl Thorndycraft** chaired the poster session for: New, original and successful ideas for teaching on Earth Sciences

EGU 2009, 23rd April 2009. **Varyl Thorndycraft** presented two posters: Quantifying flood response to Late Holocene global change and Investigating Holocene flood frequency through Bayesian age modelling of radiocarbon dated palaeoflood deposits.

Xingmin Meng attended the EGU2009 at Vienna (20th - 24th April) and chaired the session (both oral and poster) of 'Terrain Instability Analysis and Mass Movement Prevention' in the 'Natural Hazards' division. He was also nominated as a judge for the 'Young Scientists' Outstanding Poster Paper (YSOPP) Award'. He gave an oral presentation on 20th on 'Terrain Instability Assessment and Landslides Control on the Loess Terraces in Lanzhou Region, China', and a poster (together with Edward Derbyshire and Dr. Ma - Lanzhou University) on 'Application of GIS and Remote Sensing to slope instability assessment in loess terrain as a means of documentation, analysis and forecasting'.

Ed Derbyshire, as Chair of the UK National Committee of the International Year of Planet Earth 2007-2009, attended a meeting of National Committee Chairs in the Academy of Sciences, Vienna, Austria on 20 April.

Ed Derbyshire visited the Secretariat of the International Geoscience Programme (IGCP) at UNESCO HQ in Paris, 11-13 May,

in order to discuss the future of IGCP and to work on the IGCP archives for 2004-2007.

Alex Loftus presented a paper on 'Gramsci, Nature and the Philosophy of Praxis' and appeared in three separate panel discussions at the AAG in Las Vegas.

A number of departmental staff were involved in a symposium to celebrate 30 years of the International Development Planning Review (IDPR) held in Liverpool 6-7 April. **Katie Willis** was involved as an IDPR co-editor. **Vandana Desai** gave a paper entitled 'Globalisation, socio-cultural change and household strategies'. **David Simon** and **Andy Adam-Bradford** (ex-RHUL PhD student) gave a paper entitled 'Hybrid planning in the peri-urban interface: Development of resilient cities through productive planning and design along the rural-urban continuum.'

Sorayya Khan presented a paper at the 14th Annual Conference of the Emerging New Research on the Geographies of Health and Impairment (ENRGHI) at the University of Durham on April 6th, 2009. Her paper, Community Participation in Malaria Management in Rural Mali, drew the second prize in a competition of the conference presenters.

David Simon attended the 7th Open Meeting of the International Dimensions Programme of Global Environmental Change (IHDP) in Bonn, 29 April - 1 May. He participated in the session on Urban Responses to GEC, presenting a paper entitled 'Facing the GEC Challenge in Cape Town: Approach and issues' (written jointly with Susan Parnell, Univ of Cape Town). David also attended a planning meeting of the Urbanization and GEC Committee on which he serves.

ANY OTHER NEWS

Honour for Geographer

At a College ceremony on May 14th **Jason Lewis**, a geography/biology graduate of 1990, was inducted as an Honorary Fellow of the College. After graduating with his appetite for travel whetted by his time in the department, Jason with another geographer Simon Smith organised and undertook Expedition 360 - a circumnavigation of the globe entirely by human power. Jason entered the world record book for his pedal-craft crossings of the Atlantic and Pacific oceans and also for roller-blading across America.

Had he been armed with Thomas Holloway's appropriate pills he might have avoided the malaria, blood poisoning and altitude sickness to which he succumbed! An important objective was to spread amongst young people ideas about environmental stewardship and social responsibility. To this end over 800 schools were visited.

Inviting the Chairman of the College Council to induct Jason as an Honorary fellow, **David Hilling** emphasised in particular the promotion of environmental concern by Jason and also assistance given to disadvantaged children in orphanages and mercy centres in Mumbai, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and East Timor