

## Staff and Students

**Mustafa Dikeç** has been appointed to the editorial board of Environment and Planning D: Society and Space.

At the inaugural meeting of the UK National Committee on the Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change (being established as a sub-committee of the Royal Society's Committee on GEC), held on 26th October, **David Simon** was elected co-convenor.

**Weili Wang** has left the Department to take up a post in the Psychology Department. Will played an important role in helping to set up our SRIF-funded Qualitative Methods Laboratory.

### Outside Engagements

**Katie Willis** gave a seminar entitled 'Gender, Identity and the Politics of Scale among British Expatriates in China' to the Historical and Cultural Geography Group at The University of Cambridge.

**Katie Willis** gave a paper entitled 'The working lives of British and Singaporean migrants in China' as part of an ESRC-funded seminar on 'Working Lives in Post-Industrial Cities' held at the LSE on 27th October.

**Tim Unwin** convened a day seminar on ICT4D with the Centre for Distance Education, University of London, at The London Knowledge Lab, where he also gave a thought piece on "Reflections on ICT4D: Making a Difference?", 10 October.

**Tim Unwin** was a guest at the launch of the China Interest Group at the Institute of Directors, City of London Branch, by the Lord Mayor of London, the Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, and the Deputy Leader of the House of Commons, 6th October.

**Tim Unwin** was a guest at The British Council's reception chaired by Lord Neil Kinnock on the occasion of its Global Leadership Team Meeting, 10th October 2006.

**David Simon** led the discussion at the first meeting of Royal Holloway's Postcolonial Research Group on 4 October 2006. The group discussed two papers on the theme of 'Postcolonialism and development'.

**Tim Cresswell** participated in a roundtable workshop for the art exhibition 'Bordering' curated by Holly McClaren (ex RHUL Cultural Geography MA student) in Oswestry, 21st October.

**Felix Driver** and **Lowri Jones** took part in an AHRC-funded workshop in the Landscape & Environment programme, on 'Investigating the archive' organised by the Centre for Art and Travel, National Maritime Museum, 20 October.

**David Simon** spoke on ‘Africa Today’ at the Street Child Africa Sixth Form Conference; ‘Did the 8 Listen to Me’ at the City of London School for Girls on 31st October. **Ruth Payne** also ran a seminar session on child-headed households. Over 250 students attended and the keynote addresses were given by Rt Hon Hilary Benn and by Andrew Mitchell, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development. For further information, please visit: [www.streetchildafrica.org.uk](http://www.streetchildafrica.org.uk)

**Katie Willis** gave a talk on ‘Applying to study Geography at university’ as part of the RGS-IBG A/AS Level Day on 12 October.

#### Publications

**French P.W.** (2006) Deltaic and estuarine environments. In Perry C. & Taylor K. (eds) *Environmental Sedimentology*. Blackwell Publishing, London

**Unwin, T.** (2006) (In Japanese) Reflections on ability: the use of ICTs to support people with disabilities in poor countries, in: Milward-Oliver, G. (ed.), *Maitland+20 – Fixing the Missing Link*, ITU Association of Japan, 109-118.

**Spinney, J.**, 'A place of sense: a kinaesthetic ethnography of cyclists on Mont Ventoux', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24 (2006), pp. 709-732

#### Grants and Awards

**Tim Unwin** has been awarded one of The Delphe Awards for our collaboration with Ghana, Mozambique and Kenya.

#### Fieldwork-Conferences-Overseas

As part of his ESRC postdoctoral fellowship, **Fernando Garcia** organised a workshop entitled “Queer Cosmopolitanism and Changing Cities” for the 11th International Metropolis conference in Lisbon, Portugal. There were five papers, including Fernando’s on ‘Café culture in queer Madrid: conviviality and hospitality in cosmopolitan cities’.

**Felix Driver** presented a paper on ‘Disaster in the tropics: the wreck and salvage of HMS Thetis’ in a session on Disasters: Coping with Exceptional Circumstances, at the combined meeting of the History of Science Society, the Philosophy of Science Association and the Society for the Social Studies of Science, Vancouver, 3 November.

**Ed Derbyshire** spent the period 20 September – 15 October in China, as the guest of the Institute of Geology and Geophysics (Chinese Academy of Sciences), Peking University, the Gansu Academy of Sciences and Lanzhou University, Gansu Province. He presented a seminar paper to Environmental Sciences postgraduate students in Peking University on ‘Problematic Quaternary Sediments: the case of collapsible engineering soils’, and held an advisory session for selected postgraduates in the same Department. This visit also included an introduction to Prof. Yuanhang Zhang, leader of the Atmospheric Chemistry Group, which is undertaking research on urban air quality in eastern China.

The period 25 – 27 September was spent at the 7th International Symposium on Environmental Geochemistry (ISEG), held at a conference centre near the Olympic Village,

North Beijing. A precursor meeting on 24th, in the form of a Short Course in Medical Geology, which included a contribution by Ed on natural atmospheric mineral dusts. He was initiator and co-convenor of a full day Special Symposium within the 3-day ISEG event. Symposium SP01, on “Natural Dust and Environment”, was very well received. It attracted a large audience, the 15 speakers being drawn from specialists fields within earth science, epidemiology and medicine, and from 6 nations, broadly reflecting both national priorities and awareness of potential disease burden, with China having the most obvious threat to its urban populations. He returned to Peking University on 29th, attending a seminar by Prof. Denis Rousseau (France) in the Environmental Science department in the morning, and presenting one of the regular Friday afternoon seminars to an audience of about 50 (on “The International Year of Planet Earth – Opportunity and Challenge”) in the Department of Theoretical and Applied Geophysics (Prof. John Chen). He also had a meeting with Dr. Min Hu (Peking University Atmospheric Chemistry Group), which was informative, with some future potential for collaboration.

A visit to Lanzhou, 1200km west of Beijing (by train both ways), started on 4th October, toward the latter end of the ‘Liberation Week’ national holiday, and ended on 13th. After an absence of 9 years, the changes to this huge city (now with close to 4 million people) were stunning, as was the level of urban air pollution, now enhanced by the photochemical smog arising from the greatly increased private car ownership. The first duty was a long discussion with the leadership of the Geological Hazards Institute (of the Gansu Academy) on potential areas of future collaboration. Fieldwork included urban engineering geology, especially among the developing communities on the left (north) bank of the Hwang He (Yellow River) and the landslides on the terraces of the Yellow River at Heifantai, 90 minutes’ drive up-river from Lanzhou. The details of the landslide in this area had changed drastically in those 9 years; they now include the ‘National Day Landslide’ (which destroyed 3 factories, several houses and one man on October 1st, 2005) and a very fresh slide (August 2006) which had claimed a further fatality. Two lectures on “Natural dust and human health”, to the Geography and Environmental Science students of Lanzhou University (graduates in the long-established campus in Lanzhou city, but undergraduates in a new campus some 50 km east of Lanzhou) were presented on 7th October. The use of Lanzhou as an example of a population at high risk of non-industrial silicosis visibly discomfited the students, but a good range of questions ensued. The Lanzhou programme ended with a banquet hosted by the President and Vice-President of the Gansu Academy of Sciences.

#### Visitors-Meetings in the Department

Clive Oppenheimer, Department of Geography, University of Cambridge presented the Gordon Manley Lecture on 17th October. The Lecture was entitled ‘Supervolcanoes and Eruptions that Shook the World’.

**Jim Rose** presented the Departmental Seminar entitled ‘The Earliest Humans in Northern Europe’ on the 12th of October.

Jordi Marti-Henneberg from the University of Lleida, Spain and Visiting Scholar at Cambridge University presented the Departmental Seminar entitled ‘Railway and Population distribution in Europe (1850-2000) on Thursday, 26th October.

Peter Shelley, Corporate Strategy Group, DFID presented the CEDAR Workshop Seminar entitled 'Eliminating World Poverty: The Challenge for our Generation – A Discussion of the UK government's White Paper on International Development (July 2006) on 25th October.

Any Other News

Congratulations to **Mary** and Martin on the arrival of their little boy Martin Theo Dengler Jr. Theo was born on October 2nd and weighed 8 lbs 8 oz.

**Maano Ramutsindela** (PhD 1999) has been promoted to Associate Professor in the Dept of Environmental and Geographical Sciences, University of Cape Town from 1 January 2007.