

Geography

News on Geography and
Environmental Science



Third years explore environmental management applications in Florida

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE and geography students toured south Florida this Easter to investigate first-hand some of the world's biggest and most ambitious wetland and river restoration projects, from the Kissimmee River through Lake Okeechobee and the Everglades and out to the Florida Key Coral Reefs.

This year the group, led by **Dr Kate Spencer** (Reader in Environmental Geochemistry in the School of Geography), started the trip at the bottom of the watershed within the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park, where our students were able to observe the damaging effects of anthropogenic and climate change on marine water quality and the coral reefs through a series of lectures by

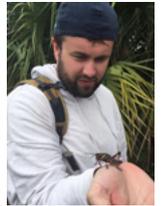
local specialists and then trips out to the coral reef.

After that they traced the water back up through the Everglades, learning how the water volumes here have changed since the arrival of people and about the damage excess nutrients from farming can cause. One of the most exciting talks was given by a park ranger who explained how the Everglades system worked, the importance of alligators as a keystone species and the importance of indicator species in monitoring the quality of the water - all of this was given while wading through a meter of water as the students 'slogged the slough'.

Final year student, **Jordan Coppin**,

who studies for a Geography BSc degree said "The adventuring began from the very first day on 'slogging a slough' and investigating different vegetation and animal species. From visiting the Florida Keys and the John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park and kayaking through mangroves and seeing a juvenile manatee come up for air, could this fieldwork get any better? It did! We got to have a ride on the classic 'airboat' that seems to characterise tourism in the Everglades and then the captain let us hold his ten year old alligator without a muzzle! Finally, we had a tour on an open-topped carriage around a dairy farm run by scientists to study agricultural impact on the Everglades and took a boat ride up the Kissimmee River to study restoration projects in action. Most importantly, what was truly important to us at the start of our scientific careers was the realisation of the effects humans really do have on the environment. A fieldwork experience not to be missed!"

- Students taking the *Environmental Management Applications* module explore the physical, environmental, political and economic issues surrounding a range of restoration and management schemes in South Florida which may include fluvial, terrestrial, estuarine, coastal and marine environments.



A swamp buggy tour of the Archbold research station © Archbold Biological Station.

Fieldtrip season comes to an end

Human geographers visit Boston

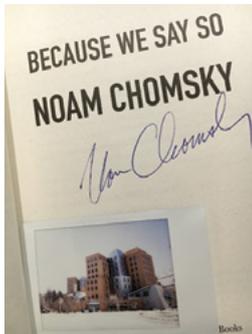
The best way to get to know a city is to dive right into it, exploring different neighbourhoods and engaging with the people and places that make it unique. This April 40 geography undergraduates spent six days doing just that in Boston – one of America’s most historic cities. The trip was the second run of the module *Boston Reworked: The Making of a North American City*, and it was undoubtedly memorable experience for everyone involved.

“One of the most exciting opportunities of visiting Boston was the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to meet and interview

Professor Noam Chomsky.

Producing over 100 books on topics such as linguistics, war, politics and democracy, Chomsky is a famous name on the bookshelves of academics and being given 40 minutes to discuss with him the political economy of science was insightful and enriching” – final year geographer **Adam Packer** reflected on the trip.

Adam added that “fieldwork enriches the whole university experience at Queen Mary especially as the Boston course is available as a second and third year module connecting geographers together from both years, as well as working outside of the computer room or lecture theatre. Without the efforts of our lecturers organising such a diverse range of exciting activities, we would never have been able to experience what we did on the field course and that’s the unique quality of the field courses at QMUL”.



Adam’s signed copy of Professor Noam Chomsky’s book.

First years go to Durham, second and third years visit New Zealand

Nearly 100 first year students went on fieldtrip to Durham at the end of semester 2. The fieldtrip is the culmination of the *Reinventing Britain* module which undergraduates on the **Geography BA** and **Human Geography BA** courses can take. The module explores a range of topics including the uneven geographies of deindustrialisation and crisis; Britain’s new service economy; gender shifts in employment and unemployment; migrant labour; place-based competition and new forms of urban regeneration.



First year geographers by the Angel of the North © Dr Kathryn Yusoff.

Meanwhile, physical geographers and environmental scientists in the second or third year can take the module *Alpine Environments* which lets them explore physical processes in the New Zealand Southern Alps. Third year environmental scientist **Sara Aweis** and second year geographer **Koh Yi Thong** shared their memories with us:

“New Zealand is known to be the adventure capital of the world, so when I was seriously considering whether to take the *Alpine Environments* module, I knew I was in for the experience of a lifetime. In order to make the most of the experience, a group of my friends and I decided to go out to Auckland and spend a few days there to explore more of NZ. Our stay on the North Island, in Auckland was nothing short of adventurous fun, ranging from kayaking to Rangitoto, hiking 45mins to view the sunset from the peak and kayaking back during the night to visiting the Maori museum with a tour guide and topping it off with a Maori cultural performance” – Sara remembered.



“Under the guidance of **Professor James Brasington**, our stay in the Lake Wakatipu region involved comprehensive studies of processes and evolutionary trends that were occurring on two of New Zealand’s signature braided rivers; while during the latter part of the trip to the Aoraki/ Mount Cook region, led by **Dr Sven Lukas**, we focused on understanding the physical processes and landscape imprints that characterised the glacial landforms of the region through a combination geomorphological mapping, studying sedimentary sequence exposures and investigating changing clast shape and morphology in the accessible proglacial regions of the Hooker and Mueller Glaciers” said Koh.

“These varied learning experiences from both parts of the fieldtrip gave us a better understanding of the physical processes and landscape formation in both fluvial and glacial environments in an ideal setting. Apart from the knowledge and skills we gained, the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the incredible landscapes of New Zealand was surreal and would certainly be a fieldtrip to be remembered” – Koh added.

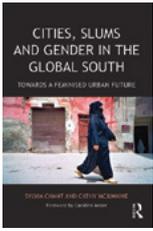
Festival of Geography 2016

IN FEBRUARY AND MARCH, the School of Geography held its second Festival of Geography (GeogFest) event series – our post-offer open days for the next generation of geographers and environmental scientists. Nearly 300 students attending over three days, the events were a great opportunity for our future students to experience a day in the life at QMUL Geography.



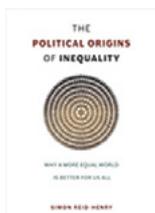
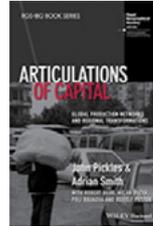
- See all the images from the Festivals of Geography at [flickr.com/photos/qmulgeog](https://www.flickr.com/photos/qmulgeog)
- For first-hand experience on what's it like to be a student at QMUL Geography, read our student blogs at blogs.studentlife.qmul.ac.uk

New publications



Professor Cathy McIlwaine's most recent book *Cities, slums and gender in the Global South: towards a feminised urban future* (Routledge, 2016), co-authored by Sylvia Chant, revolves around conceptualisation of the 'gender-urban-slum interface' which explains key elements to understanding women's experiences in slum environments.

Articulations of Capital: Global Production Networks and Regional Transformations (Wiley-Blackwell RGS-IBG Book Series, 2016) offers an accessible, grounded, yet theoretically-sophisticated account of the geographies of global production networks, value chains, and regional development in post-socialist Eastern and Central Europe. The book is written by John Pickles and QMUL Geography's **Professor Adrian Smith** (with Robert Begg, Milan Bucek, Poli Roukova and Rudolf Pástor).



Dr Simon Reid-Henry rewrites the usual story of globalization and development as a story of the management of inequality. Reaching back to the eighteenth century and around the globe, *The Political Origins of Inequality* (University of Chicago Press, 2016) foregrounds the political turning points and decisions behind the making of today's uneven societies.

Encountering Difference (Polity Press, 2016) shows how people from various societies learn to live with social and cultural diversity, and considers how the concepts of identity formation, diaspora and creolization shed light on the processes and geographies of encounter – written by QMUL Geography's **Dr Olivia Sheringham** and Professor Robin Cohen.



Grant successes

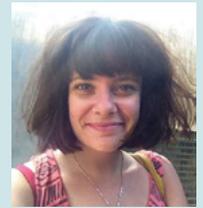
Dr Kate Spencer and **Dr Simon Carr**, Senior Lecturer in Geography, were awarded a NERC research grant (£693K) to study 3-Dimensional Floc Structure and Dynamics. The project is an interdisciplinary collaboration with **Dr Andy Bushby** and **Dr Lorenzo Botto**, from QMUL's School of Engineering and Materials Science (SEMS). **Jonathan Wheatland**, who completed his undergraduate degree at the School of Geography and is now a PhD student in SEMS, is also involved in the project.

Professor Cathy McIlwaine has been awarded an ESRC/Newton grant of £320K for her project on *Healthy, Secure and Gender Just Cities: Transnational Perspectives on Urban Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) in Rio de Janeiro and London* – a collaboration between QMUL's Schools of Geography and English and Drama; People's Palace Projects; CASA Latin American Theatre Festival; Latin American Women's Rights Service; Eliana Sousa Silva and others at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro; and a number of NGOs in Brazil.

Dr Simon Lewis has been awarded a grant of £250K from The Leverhulme Trust on *The Breckland Palaeolithic project: culture, technology and evolving humans*. This project will employ a postdoctoral research associate for three years and a research assistant for 1.5 years and will involve collaboration with the British Museum and the Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle in Paris.

New staff

Dr Fran Darlington-Pollock joined the School in January, as a lecturer in geography.



Fran's research focuses on the nature of ethnic inequalities in health and explanations for changing health gradients rooted in migration, deprivation change and social mobility.

Dr Yara Evans returns to the School of Geography as postdoctoral research assistant – she



will be working with Professor Cathy McIlwaine on her ESRC project on *Healthy, Secure and Gender Just Cities*. Yara was previously a postdoctoral research assistant on the *ESRC Global Cities at Work* project.

Dr Rob Davis joins the School as postdoctoral research assistant and will be working with Dr Simon Lewis on the *Breckland Palaeolithic Project*, for the next three years. Rob completed a PhD at Reading University on the *Palaeolithic archaeology of the Solent River* and has since been working on the *Fragmented Heritage* project based at Bradford University.

Dr Vicky Holmes joins us as a Visiting Research Fellow. She is a historian of the 19th-century working-class home in Britain, with a focus on the rural and urban location of East Anglia. Her focus is on exploring in depth the domestic lives of those living and sleeping within the working-class home.

Stepping Stones

Stepping Stones – a small team of current undergraduates – work with local schools in east London to provide mentoring for Year 12 students with little previous exposure to university. The project is in its second year and all participating sixth formers have successfully completed the project by handing in a globalisation essay.

“Your outreach work has had a considerable impact on our students – the feedback from students on the Stepping Stones project was incredibly positive, and the number of students we have now applying to study geography is soaring, so thank you for your significant contribution to this” – said Alice Ward, Head of Sixth Form, Mulberry School for Girls.

- The project is overseen by **Dr Stephen Taylor**, email him for more info at stephen.taylor@qmul.ac.uk



Geographical Association East London branch continues to thrive



The East London branch of the Geographical Association meets several times a term with events for sixth formers and teachers. This year we have enjoyed lectures by **Dr Stephen Taylor** on

sustainable development goals and **Dr Sven Lukas** on glaciation. Over 50 local AS students enjoyed revision classes in the Easter holidays as part of our GA programme. Our spring fieldwork workshop, led by **Professor Alastair Owens**, drew on Tower Hamlets as a resource for the Changing Places element of the new A Level specs. The resources generated by all events are free to download from the teacher pages of our website.

- Check the website for upcoming GA events and teachers resources at geog.qmul.ac.uk/teachers



News in brief

- Thinking of studying for a masters? Check out the School of Geography's postgraduate programmes and funding opportunities at geog.qmul.ac.uk/admissions/masters
- Centre of the Studies of Home PhD researcher, **Dr Laura Humphreys**, is one of the guest curators of the Geffrye Museum's *Swept Under the Carpet? Servants in London households, 1600-2000* exhibition – open until early September
- **Dr Philippa Williams** has been awarded the 2016 Julian Minghi Distinguished Book Award by the Political Geography Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers (AAG) for her book *Everyday peace? Politics, Citizenship and Muslim lives in India* (Wiley, RGS-IBG Book Series, 2015)
- **Dr Erica Pani** has been awarded the annual prize for the best PhD in Economic Geography by the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)'s Economic Geography Research Group
- Masters graduate, **Vinicius Delboni**, has been awarded for his excellent dissertation by the Worshipful Company of Water Conservators – supporter of *Integrated Management of Freshwater Environments MSc* students
- The School hosts [research seminars](#) every Tuesday lunch time, during term time. Check our website for details geog.qmul.ac.uk
- This academic year, the School of Geography raised more than £500 for various charities, including *Breast Cancer Now*, *Young People's Trust for the Environment*, *the Fairtrade Foundation*, and more. Our cartographer and web manager, **Ed Oliver**'s work has been fundamental in these fundraising activities
- Save the date! **Dr Tom Slater** will deliver the **13th David M Smith annual lecture** at QMUL on 30.11.16, entitled *From territorial stigma to territorial justice: a critique of vested interest urbanism*. The day is also a reunion for all geography, geology and environmental scientist alumni.

Worldview 2016: photo competition winners announced

This year we have received over 100 entries to the School of Geography's annual photography competition, Worldview 2016. Open to everyone who studies or works in the School, students and staff were able to submit images in four categories: **Resilient Earth**, **My Place in the World**, **Boundaries** and **City Life**.



Winner: Thomas Fletcher-Wilson,
Geography with Business Management BSc.
Dharavi, Mumbai – City Life.

“This image shows a woman using her feet to spread out plastic which is being melted by the sun on top of the roofs of Dharavi in Mumbai. There is an element of surrealism to this photograph. It is almost as if the woman pictured is walking on snow or clouds, when in fact the harsh reality is, it’s hot melting plastic.”



Runner-up: Suzy Solley,
PhD student.
Langtang, Nepal – My Place in the World.

“This is a photograph of a mother and her daughter in the Himalayan village of Langtang. When I go trekking I often take pencils to give to the local children or something to play with – in this instance it was bubbles. I took this picture on the 25th April 2014 – exactly a year to the day before a devastating earthquake struck Nepal and a subsequent avalanche flattened most of this village. Since then not a day has gone by when I haven’t thought about the people of Langtang – I feel part of me has been left there.”



Highly commended: Naomi Ralph, Geography BSc.
Arrecife Beach, Lanzarote – Resilient Earth

“As the climate warms and the population increases by an unsustainable amount, the Earth itself is forever changing. As the sun breaks through the mountain tops in this image, we are able to observe the true power of the planet, as the silhouettes of the mountain reflect their true strength and size. As we continue to change our planet, it will continue to fight back. In the words of Chris d’Lacey: ‘What you take from the Earth, you must give back. That’s nature’s way.’”

See all the images submitted
to the photo competition at
[flickr.com/photos/
qmulgeog](https://www.flickr.com/photos/qmulgeog/)