Well, it’s been a busy end to 2008 for staff and students alike, with the students cramming for exams, meeting coursework deadlines, then the staff marking all the work. Staff and postgraduates have been busy presenting their research at conferences in New Zealand and Europe, and publishing their work in books and academic journals. The arrival of Spring and Summer means its time for fieldwork, and many of us are looking forward to this part of the year! We also run various summer school papers - please contact me if you need any information at all about the degree courses and papers we run, I would be very happy to help. Have a great summer!

Dr Matt Henry, Geography Programme co-ordinator, m.g.henry@massey.ac.nz

Welcome to the Geography Programme

From Humboldt State University to Massey and back

Justin Tucker and Max Unger, exchange students from Humboldt State University, California, relate to us their 2008, studying Geography at Massey:

“Coming from northern California (13 hours drive from LA) to New Zealand has been amazing. I come from Humboldt State University (HSU) on the far north coast of California amongst the Giant Redwood Forests. Before HSU, I had to figure out what subject to study. I quickly fell in love with Geography, as it relates to my favourite magazine while growing up, National Geographic. NZ started off great and has been throughout. I travelled with my best bud, Max, for a week in Fiji, and 5 weeks in the South Island before beginning Massey. Max also scored the same exchange program, as I got him to apply back at HSU. In the South Island, we tramped our butts off, hitch-hiking between tracks and enjoying every moment of our radically free lives. Every person we met and every experience we shared with each other and our generous navigators have been precious gifts of the universe and reminded us that we were both suckling from a much more powerful source than the US government; both of whom I plan to pay back in time. Study here at Massey has tremendous rewards and I have studied fascinating subjects while meeting interesting and international friends I will keep for life. As lame as it sounds, learning is like having new experiences in new places, they are the most joyful things and greatest gifts one can give to themselves.”

Justin

“Geography to me is knowledge that is always changing and growing and that's why I can relate to this vast subject. I'm a nature boy and always have been and when I go tramping it's like my whole Geobook comes alive. Thankfully I met my bro Justin who has been a considerable help keeping me in school and has also made quite the travel companion. While skate-boarding on campus one day I almost ran into Justin and took him out. It was a good thing because he was on his way to the study abroad meeting, so I grabbed a big plate of nachos and went with him. Our study abroad councilwomen told us all about her trips to NZ, getting us both really stoked on exploring it. This last year at Massey has been like a bonus year in my life. I have never met so many people from around the world with cool stories about their homeland. Geography at Massey is pretty sweet and the professors are really down to Earth and easy to relate to. If there are any students out there thinking about studying Geography and have a love for understanding landforms and much, much more, I highly recommend Geography. This subject will open your mind and help you to understand just how far out of control the human race is and how important it is today to reclaim your personal sovereignty and use radical commonsense in order to navigate through the multi-dimensional reality.”

Peace, Max Unger

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Hello to new Geography Lecturers!

The latter part of 2008 has seen the appointment of two new lecturers, one each in human geography (Dr Russell Prince) and physical geography (Dr Kat Holt). Both are New Zealanders, with Russell returning to Aotearoa from Bristol University, where he has recently completed his PhD. Kat recently finished her PhD here at Massey University. In addition to strengthening our current paper offerings, the appointment of Kat and Russell allows us to offer an expanded range of Geography papers over the coming years. Below are brief introductions to both Kat and Russell, outlining their backgrounds, research areas and teaching expertise.

Dr Kat Holt

Born in Napier, N.Z. in 1981, I moved to Palmerston North in 1999 to begin undergraduate studies in Earth Sciences and Geography. Almost 10 years later I completed my PhD here at Massey, under joint supervision from the Earth Science programme in the Institute of Natural Resources (INR) and the Geography programme here in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. My thesis is entitled "The Quaternary History of Chatham Island, New Zealand". I was funded through a Massey University Doctoral Scholarship, with additional support from the New Zealand Geological Society J Hastie scholarship and Wellman Research Award, and the Helen E. Akers PhD Scholarship. My research focused on elucidating the Quaternary environmental and vegetation history of Chatham Island, the largest island in the Chatham Islands group. The Islands represent the eastern-most land of our country and are of particular biogeographical, biological, ecological and geological significance. In June of this year I joined the Physical Geography team as a lecturer. It’s been fantastic so far, and now having almost completed my first semester in the position, I’m looking forward to a long and busy summer in the field! My main research interests are Quaternary biogeography, Quaternary environmental reconstructions, palynology (pollen analysis) and paleoclimates. I also have a strong interest in New Zealand native vegetation, and also New Zealand geology. Current research projects I am involved with include:

• History of vegetation change in relation to erosion and climate change over time in the Gisborne-Waipoa area.
• Developing a high-resolution Late-Glacial palaeoclimatic and paleovegetation record from the lake-bottom sediments of Lake Rangatauanui (Ohakune).
• On-going research into the Quaternary history of Chatham Island, continuing on from my PhD research.
• The Pollen Research Group - continuing development of the ‘AutoStage’ system for automation of counting pollen.

Who sys Txtg is not a srous subjct 4 Geogrphrs!

Mobile phones seem to have become a ubiquitous consumer item (e.g., texting in lectures!!?). Wanting to find out more about the importance of SMS texting & mobile phone use, Juliana and Emma Dressler Hawke from the Dept. of Communication, Journalism & Marketing have surveyed 300+ students. They found (perhaps not surprisingly!) that the phone is considered an essential medium for communication, that its rarely turned off, and that many students panic if phones are lost. What’s perhaps more interesting is that these characteristics were also prevalent in phone users aged >25. The project thus provides exploratory data intended to inform a larger project on gendered, aged, and intergenerational dimensions of phone use and the social and spatial networks mobile phone use enables.

Dr Russell Prince

The lecturing post here at Massey has meant a return to New Zealand after four years doing my PhD in Bristol in the UK, although it is to a different part of the country having grown up and spent most of my life in South Auckland. I did not study geography in high school and it wasn’t until the second year of undergraduate at the University of Auckland that I first picked it up. It was part of an Arts degree - I decided to add to the Commerce degree I was undertaking when I realised I didn’t want to end up working in sales or accountancy. I enjoyed it so much I went on to complete an MA with Richard Le Heron looking at the Knowledge Wave conferences (remember them?) as a technology of globalisation. I had the good fortune of getting a Bright Futures Top Achiever Doctoral Scholarship (a similar scholarship to the one Alastair Clement is currently a recipient of) in 2004 which enabled me to go and study at the University of Bristol with Adam Tickell and Wendy Larner. My research looked at the transfer of creative industries policy from the UK to New Zealand since 2000. It argues for a post-national understanding of policy formation which recognises that policy forms in particular transnational networks of experts with particular geographies. The thesis, entitled “Assembling the creative economy: epistemic communities, policy transfer and the geography of expertise”, traces the contours of an emerging transnational epistemic community of creative industries experts supported by an infrastructure of international conferences, research institutes and scholarly publications and journals. These collective actors are potentially powerful forces shaping states and societies through their influence on policy. I intend to develop these themes further in future.

Image 344x61 to 569x195

Image 370x598 to 557x792

Image 518x281”

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Recent Conference Presentations

The second half of 2008 has seen postgraduate and staff research presented at international conferences at home and abroad. In addition to the many papers we presented at the New Zealand Geographical Society Annual Conference in July (outlined in Compass Points Issue 1), the following presentations have been made recently:


Barcelona and Back

Prof. Mike Roche attended the Commission on the dynamics of economic spaces International Geographical Union meeting, hosted by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Mike outlines the highlights of his trip below:

“The actual venue was the Casa Convalcència, originally part of the Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau. Architecturally this is a notable work of Catalanian Modernism. It was listed as part of UNESCO’s Cultural Heritage for Humanity in 1997. I also took the opportunity to look at Gaudi’s famous La Sagrada Familia cathedral, in so doing breathing a sigh of relief that by taking art history in the 6th form I had been able to avoid chemistry (the emotion being equally shared by the chemistry teachers as well I should think). The old centre of the known as the Gothic Quarter was not built on a grid layout readily gave it a particular feel. A fieldtrip took us to the logistics centre near the airport where the local river had been relocated a km or so to the west and to a local ‘agricultural park’ [notable for its artichoke production]. Nearby was an abandoned farm house of the type that feature on TV’s Living Channel being renovated, with attendant crises by ex-pat Brits. The food was excellent and the conference had a strong focus on networks, pertinent to my on-going Tung Oil research. I returned via a short stint doing archival research at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew (with the bonus of enjoying free access to the gardens). Thereafter I spent a few days in Singapore doing some work at the Botanical Gardens as well as presenting a version of my Imperial networks and Tung Oil research to the Geography Department at the National University of Singapore. This was an enjoyable return visit and I even collected some photos of the remnant 7ha of tropical forest at the botanical gardens. The 25°C temperature difference between Singapore and Auckland was to say the least a shock to the system.”

Landscapes of e-learning

Though Dr Juliana Mansvelt’s primary research areas are ageing and consumption, Juliana spent the summer months of early 2008 exploring landscapes of e-learning. A $48,000 research grant from the Ministry of Education was used to conduct an online survey and 40 qualitative interviews with staff in two universities and three polytechnics to explore staff experiences, practices and desires related to their needs for e-learning professional development. Juliana found landscapes of e-learning to be uneven, with experiences of and opportunities to engage in professional development varying as a consequence of both individual preferences and institutional contexts. The research report (written jointly with a team from Otago University) is due to be published by the Ministry of Education soon and includes a framework and a set of principles which should enabling all NZ tertiary education institutions to ascertain their e-learning PD preferences and priorities. Her findings have been presented to the NZ Tertiary e-learning Reference Group (a group of key institutional e-learning stakeholders), at the DEANZ conference in Wellington (17 August - Wednesday 20 August) and have also been published in the International Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (2008, 2(2). 75-85). She will also present her findings as a representative of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at the ASCILITE Conference in Melbourne (29 November to 3rd December).
**Spring/Summer Fieldwork**

With semester 2 behind us all, there is much fieldwork to be done over the Spring and Summer! Ian Fuller has already started pushing on with fieldwork laser scanning the Tarndale Slip and Fan, with Chris Massey at GNS and Mike Marden from Landcare Research. Ian has been re-surveying the upper Motueka and Motupiko near Tapawera, Motueka, with David Feek and students. He has an international river expert, Prof Mark Macklin visiting in December. Martin Brook has been working down at Tasman Glacier with a television crew from ZDF TV in Germany, for an environmental change programme to be shown at prime time on the German equivalent of TV One (see photo below). Students Rob Dykes, Clare Robertson and John Appleby helped out, as did David Feek, our technician. Martin has further fieldwork planned with colleagues from the Universities of Auckland, Canterbury, Wellington and Aberystwyth at various stages throughout the summer. Locally, Alastair Clement is cracking on with his PhD research in the lower Manawatu valley.

![Fieldwork Image](Image)

Above: Rob Dykes prepares to push off a heavily-laden boat of ZDF-TV camera crew, Martin Brook and David Feek on Tasman Lake. Various captions have been put forward on Facebook.

**Well Done Jane!**

Congratulations to Geography honours student, Jane Richardson who presented her research at the recent New Zealand Freshwater Sciences Society conference in New Plymouth. Jane won an award for “Best presentation on a Fish & Game topic”, for her research on the lower Rangitikei River.

**Geography the Winner! At Footy.**

On 14 October the Geography Programme took on the Massey Institute of Development Studies in the annual encounter. Despite several injuries and a referee called Wayne Barnes, Geography pummelled Development Studies into submission 4-nil. The victory was celebrated well into the night. A photo of the dramatic encounter is to the right.

**Recent Staff Publications**


Geography MA student Andy Wilson struggles with the pace.