

# THE MONADNOCK

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR



Since I returned to Clark in the summer of 2010, the idea of resuscitating *The Monadnock* has been proposed to me many times. I scarcely had my knees under my desk before Doug Johnson suggested that this would be a good idea. Then over the years, one or another alum asked after *The Monadnock* and its possible resurrection. The conversation heated up during preparations for the alumni reunion in October 2013, and it was then that we finally committed to doing something. I think the defining moment was when three CUGS members gave a presentation on the current

life and times of the graduate student body—and again, several alumni said “this is why we need *The Monadnock*, to hear more about what’s going on.” Subsequently a number of you made very generous contributions that have made this possible. For their part, CUGS have given of their time, ideas and initiative, as have members of the ever-wonderful GSG staff, especially Rachel Levitt.

The relaunch of *The Monadnock* will have two parts. First, we have digitized all the earlier numbers of *The Monadnock* and have placed them on the GSG website. We hope that these will be read by not just alumni, but also by students and others with an interest in the history of Geography at Clark. We also hope that some of you might have fun perusing these issues and reacquainting yourselves with parts of your earlier lives. Of course, posting these back issues is only possible because of all the work that was done by prior generations of contributors to, and above all editors of, *The Monadnock*. We give our many thanks to you for a remarkable job, and for having bequeathed an important written record of the history of the GSG.

Second, CUGS has taken up the gauntlet of producing this new edition of *Monadnock*. Many people in CUGS have been instrumental in this and I am very grateful to them all. A very special thanks must go to Chris Knudson who has guided and inspired this relaunch. CUGS now have a standing *Monadnock* committee so that the publication can be passed from cohort to cohort.

We don’t want to offer too much and then not deliver. So for the time being the plan is to produce just one number a year, combining both CUGS and, in due course, alumni contributions (we hope you will be inspired to offer short articles). Then we will see how it goes—but the commitment is to recognize and celebrate the work of earlier generations of graduate students and faculty who first brought *Monadnock* into being, to keep it alive as a very particular way of linking CUGS present and CUGS past, and to recognize that, really, it is just one CUGS and one GSG stretched out over time. As we’d say in Latin America:  
*Viva CUGS!*

All the best,

Tony Bebbington

## EDITOR’S LETTER

This August we held Field Camp at Lake Massapoag, in northeastern Massachusetts. By coincidence CUGS had first gone there seventy-five years ago. It is easy to think of the late summer of 1939 as the distant past. Europe had just descended into open war, and many at Camp would soon serve in uniform. But at the Lake the intervening years seemed insignificant: I could imagine those students, like us, going to bed in wooden cabins after a night of telling stories and making music around the fire. And at the end of camp they, too, returned to Clark as a group, “rather than as a couple of dozen self-centered individuals,” as that semester’s *Monadnock* put it.

While at Field Camp I thought about the year to come for those students. Once back at Clark they would share photos from Massapoag, debate the use of CUGS funds at meetings, worry about the insularity of the department (and would be hopeful that Atwood Hall, completed the previous winter, would draw them further into the Clark community), and travel together to Chicago for the annual AAG meeting. The similarities to today again made me think of how slight the distance of seventy-five years is. The Fall 1939 *Monadnock*, like every other issue, is a record of the activities that formed the current students into a strong community. When taken as a whole the magazine also shows how all these modest activities add up to traditions that unite the generations of CUGS over time.

When I first began reading *The Monadnock* I thought its historical benefit lay primarily in chronicling these continuities. As I read more issues, though, I also came across interrupted traditions that we might want to bring back. This issue describes several revivals of past practices, large and small. But even existing traditions can be rethought in the light of history. My greatest surprise in reading *The Monadnock* was learning that the weekend outing we call Field Camp was for the first several decades of the GSG a three-week outdoor course in physical geography. I am sure many in CUGS would enjoy a return to our roots. And we could do it. To amend a familiar saying, those who remember the past are able to repeat it.

Our goal in restarting *The Monadnock* is to create a stronger community among students and alumni. As CUGS President Paul Siple wrote in 1938, it is alumni who, “more than anyone else, can understand and sympathize with our problems, even though most of us have never met.” This observation has stayed with me. It encapsulates the way that each issue of this magazine looks to the past for connection, as Siple did, while itself becoming a future source of understanding, as Siple is to us now. The relaunch of *The Monadnock* has been inspired by this act of looking both forward and backward in time. It is our highest hope that this issue will be only the first of many to come, with each one linking us to the future just as surely as it links us to the past.

Happy reading,

Chris Knudson

*Over the decades CUGS members have conducted dissertation research on every continent. These reports are from current students.*

**Katherine Foo**

My dissertation examines changing patterns of tree cover in Boston, Philadelphia, and Baltimore across each city's development, with a focus on the last decade. The differential success of these three cities can be explained through the cross sector and multi-level institutional arrangements governing each city's tree planting initiatives. I've been fascinated to find that Boston—the wealthiest of the cities—explains its relatively slow progress through the lack of celebrity underwriters and its poor civic leadership. Philadelphia and Baltimore, however, have created innovative public-private partnerships and mitigation laws that fund urban tree initiatives. These variations suggest that urban tree cover does not directly follow urban wealth; rather, multi-level public sector partnerships may significantly shape the resources available for increasing urban tree canopies.

**Adrienne Johnson**

Last year, I spent 10 months conducting qualitative research on the power relations embedded in Ecuador's newest certification initiative, known as the Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil (RSPO). My research took me from small, Afro-Ecuadorian and indigenous communities threatened by palm

expansion, all the way to the headquarters of big palm companies looking to intensify their investments. My research reveals that although RSPO certification is gaining popularity, the complete implementation of RSPO standards is being challenged by *pudrición del cogollo*—bud rot disease that has devastated thousands of hectares of palm oil plantations across Latin America. The new direction of my research will investigate how the invasion of this microorganism is disrupting market-based environmental governance schemes that aim to completely manage nature while increasing capitalist profit.

**John Lauermann**

I research urban land investments associated with sports 'megaevents' like the Olympics. The point is to theorize institutional inequalities in land planning, which come to the fore in political debates over these megaprojects. Doha, Qatar is a city that frequently bids—successfully and otherwise—to host a variety of sports events, and is in a \$250 billion construction boom in preparation for the 2022 World Cup. My fieldwork there included archival research on land use and interviews with private sector and governmental planners. I arrived expecting

difficulties in discussing migrant labor exploitation, which is rampant in the construction sector. But I was surprised by how openly these issues are discussed, perhaps because most of the city's elite are themselves migrant or expatriate workers.

**Miles Kenney-Lazar**

Over the past year I've conducted fieldwork on peasant resistance to large-scale tree plantation investments in the Lao People's Democratic Republic. While the Lao state has sought to generate economic growth and local development by granting long-term land leases to private investors, such investments threaten to dispossess peasants from vitally important lands and resources. Villagers that openly protest investment projects face heavy-handed state repression and thus resistance must occur indirectly. In my research, I examine how alternative modes of resistance materialize and the political-economic factors that enable communities to effectively prevent expropriation. It has been a remarkable experience to study the creativity and strength that peasant communities employ to struggle against top-down investments, upending unequal power relations and protecting their spaces of production and life.

Jean Heffernan was the Assistant to the Director and School Administrator in the GSG for over twenty-five years. She worked on the departmental budget, ran search, promotion and tenure committees, and helped new professors settle in. She also took every opportunity to get to know students better.

Jean Heffernan came to Clark University in 1981 as both an employee and a student. During the day Jean assisted the Education Department Chair; at night she took classes for a BA in Psychology. In both realms Jean studied human behavior, curious how people make decisions.

In 1985, Jean heard about an opening in the GSG. "At the time there were not a lot of staff positions to aspire to," she said. Her hiring was a promotion with more responsibility. But it made taking classes more difficult, especially with two young children and a husband who also worked full-time. "I had to finish or stop," she recalled thinking. She finished by taking two years of full course loads, graduating summa cum laude in 1990. "I was very proud of that... I had to know I could do it," she said.

Jean's parents had stressed the importance of education. Her father, who was trained as a dentist, escaped the Spanish Civil War for Miami on a cargo ship. He met Jean's mother while teaching a Spanish class in New York City. They settled in Whitinsville, MA, in the Blackstone Valley, so that Jean's father could set up his practice, which he ran out of their home. "He was the old-fashioned dentist who would see patients on weekends," Jean said.

Jean's retirement this past spring was not her first departure from Clark. In 2000, she left for EMC Corporation, a data storage firm. "I think I had to find out if there was something I could do other than academia," she said. After a few years she began to miss Clark's educational mission. "A lot of the foundations of [what the GSG does] comes from staff," she said.



Jean Heffernan receiving her diploma from President Traina at Clark in 1990

Returning meant being able to contribute to, and take pride in, its accomplishments.

Jean has approached retirement with happiness and trepidation. "My friends tell me that once they've retired they're busier than ever," Jean said. She will have more time to spend with her seven grandchildren, all close to her home in Spencer, MA. She will also pursue her passion for animals, by volunteering at a shelter, and learning more about animal welfare legislation in Massachusetts. This past May, Jean left Clark as she entered it: a life-long learner, curious and concerned about those around her.

On behalf of everyone in the GSG who have benefitted from Jean's dedication and skill, we offer Jean our warmest appreciation and best wishes on her retirement.—Chris Knudson



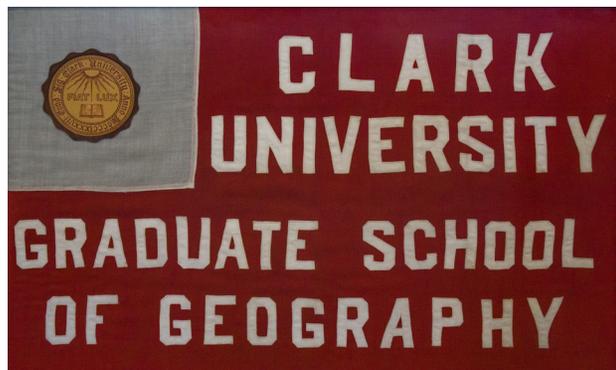
Clark University Graduate School of Geography students, faculty and staff gathered in May for a group portrait in the Geography Commons. From left to right, front row: Mireya Bravo, Brenda Nikas-Hayes, Dr. James Murphy, Dr. Yuko Aoyama, Jean Heffernan, Hilary Laraba, Dr. Dianne Rocheleau, Dr. Richard Peet. Second Row: Fernando Hernandez Espino, Alireza Farahani, Kristen Shake, Dr. Deborah Martin, Chris Knudson, Kelly Kay, Kathryn Meng, Arthur Elmes, Dr. Dominik Kulakowski.

Third row: Ashley York, Dexter Locke, Teresa Bornschlegl, William Collier, Renee Tapp, Young-Long Kim, Ali Santacruz, Elisa Arond, Yueming Zhang. Back row: Azadeh Esfahani, Catherine Jampel, Son Ca Lam, Juan Luis Dammert, Jim Thatcher, Luke Trusel, John Lauer-mann, Nicholas Cuba. *Photo by Mireya Bravo*

# Polar Geography at Clark

Polar science research at the GSG has a long history. Paul Siple first went to Antarctica in 1928 at the age of 19 after a nationwide search for a Boy Scout to join Admiral Byrd's expedition. By the time Siple arrived at Clark in 1936 he had already made another two-year voyage with Byrd, this time as chief biologist, and had published two popular books on his missions. It is clear from the Monadnock that Siple was greatly missed when, after graduating, he left for his third trip to the "bottom of the world" in 1939. CUGS gave him a farewell dinner, and the Society's flag to fly on the "Antarctic wastes." As a Research Associate he kept in contact with Clark students and faculty through short-wave radio.

The polar research that has been conducted at Clark, and elsewhere, during the past seventy-five years owes much to Siple, not just in its theoretical and empirical foundations, but also in his amelioration of practical difficulties. In 1956-57 Siple was the scientific leader of the first group to winter at the South Pole. This work, during the beginning of the International Geophysical Year, brought him greater prominence—he was on the cover of *Time*—and led to the permanent human occupation of the South Pole.



Siple flew this flag at Little America III, an exploration base located on the Ross Ice Shelf, from 1939-41. It now hangs in the Geography Commons. *Photo by Rachel Levitt*

Siple and his team learned how to endure the six-month "night," with its lows of  $-70^{\circ}\text{C}$  and winds over 50 km/h. This expedition relied on his earlier pioneering work on the effects of extreme cold, most notably his dissertation, wherein he developed the wind chill factor.

Antarctica has become less remote during the past century. Thanks to the researchers of Siple's generation and later, the continent is more accessible and better understood. At the same time, climate change has ensured that the polar regions figure prominently when considering our future. Today's students and faculty in the Polar Science Research Lab, headed by Dr. Karen Frey, are at the forefront of investigating these pressing concerns. Much of the research uses remote sensing techniques to examine the dynamic relationship between ice, the ocean, and the atmosphere. In the south, Luke Trusel is investigating the magnitude of melt across the surface of Antarctica. And at the other pole, Ashley

York's work combines remote sensing techniques with field observations to better understand outlet glacial dynamics in West Greenland (see sidebar).

Dr. Frey's students also research ocean biogeochemistry in the Arctic and subarctic seas. Christie Logvinova's dissertation aims to understand how sea ice decline impacts dissolved organic matter in the Bering and Chukchi Seas. Melishia Santiago's work examines the impacts of thinning sea ice cover on light propagation and biogeochemistry in the Pacific Arctic Region. And Kristen Shake is studying the human impacts of sea ice loss in the Arctic Ocean and its adjacent seas, with a specific focus on the legal regimes of maritime operations in the region. Even though the precise future of the polar regions remains uncertain, we are confident in the ability of the polar science community to continue to invent new ways of researching and communicating their work to the world. Clark Geography will continue its long history of exploring and elucidating these frozen worlds.— *Kristen Shake and Chris Knudson*

## Field Diary

### Traveling to Unexplored Ice in Greenland

by Ashley York

It was our fourth and final field day. We had been snowed into Qaarsut, unable to fly the helicopter because of the low cloud ceilings for the past two days.

We divided into two teams to fit in the helicopter: the radar team would be dropped off at the site first and the ice core/snow pit team would arrive second. The first team set out, and about a half an hour later it was a relief to see the helicopter return empty and that the radar team had been successfully dropped off. We loaded the second team into the helicopter and took off up one of the narrow glaciated valleys. We continued to gain elevation and eventually reached our field site: a 2,000 meter ice cap previously uncored by any other science team and possibly untouched by any other human.

It was bright blue skies and the warmest day we had had so far at  $-11^{\circ}\text{C}$ . All we could see for miles were ice caps and mountain peaks poking through valleys full of clouds. I realized then that this was the closest I would ever get to being on top of the world.



View from the helicopter on the way to the coring site on Nuus-suaq Peninsula near Qaarsut, West Greenland.

## Penne for Your Thoughts

Inspired by the required first-year course Explanation in Geography, taught by Professor Peet, the Explanation in Gastronomy Conceptual Potluck began as a way of exploring geographical concepts through food. The challenge is a simple one: to express a geographical concept gastronomically, using whatever ingredients and presentation necessary to convey your idea. Each person brings a dish to share, and then the attendees try all of the food, and vote to determine the winners of the Most Delectable Dish and Most Delectable Concept awards.

Legend has it that the idea for the conceptual potluck came in a dream. PhD student Elisa Arond dreamed that she had forgotten that the assignment for Professor Peet's class that day was to prepare a dish which illustrated an assigned concept. While her classmates showed up with their dishes, representative of feminism, post-structuralism, logical positivism, and phenomenology, Elisa arrived empty-handed. Luckily, she was given a second chance at cooking up a concept when her dream was transformed into a CUGS potluck event, and the rest is history.

This year's potluck was held on May 2. The dishes represented a breadth of concepts ranging from vibrant matter (Jell-O) and satisficing (lentil soup using ingredients on hand, and limited time), to class struggle (Soju, a cheap Korean working-class liquor) and Foucault's Panopticon (a single, last, piece of chocolate). While the competition was steep, and the dishes were delicious, only two could be selected as the winners.

This year, Kelly Kay won best concept for her illustration of climate change through a baked Alaska cake, and Chris Knudson won best dish for his representation of petty commodity production through homemade Cheez-It crackers. For posterity, last year Young-Long Kim won the award for best concept by representing Edward Said's Orientalism through a Korean seaweed dish; and the award for best dish was a tie between Mireya Bravo, who illustrated magical realism by cooking a flying fish, and Jim Thatcher, who represented diverse economies with homebrewed beer.

—Kelly Kay

### The Original CUGS Conceptual Potluck?

A month after the dinner described above was held, we found what may be CUGS's first conceptual potluck. This account is from the Fall 1939 Monadnock:

*The thirteenth Annual Field Camp Party in honor of President Atwood's birthday was held the evening of October second at Camp Massapoag. Fancy paper hats lent an air of gaiety to the long dining table but the colors also reminded one of land use and other symbols diligently mapped in the field. Some hats were permanent pasture with an industrial district border, while such eminent guests as Dr. Jones wore public recreations with a kamey area outcropping above the right eye.*

*The menu aided in promoting that geographic feeling:*

*Tomato Cocktail Massapoag  
Kame  
Thin Till Sauce  
Pommes de Terre Roches Moutonnées  
Sweet Potatoes Pingreeville  
Carrots Alden  
Drumlins and Clay  
Juniper Communis Pudding  
Essence of Podzol B  
Lait Outwash  
Anticlines*

## Graduate School Soundtrack

**Dancing came to a screeching halt April 30 with the release of Los Party Killers' debut album, 1-800-KILL-THE-PARTY.**

True to their name, Los Party Killers keep the music going but effectively end the fiesta. The six-track album deftly captures the anxiety of PhD students and ambivalent residents of Main South in two-part harmonies that can even warm the heart of a grad student living in a triple-decker in the middle of January. Unsurprisingly from an album made by geographers, place is a reoccurring theme. Singer-songwriters Juan Luis Dammert, Elisa Arond, Alida Cantor, and Will Collier parade us to the Mezz in the opening anthem "I'm Going to the Mezz" and again check in with us midway through with "Procrastination" before sweeping us out in the closing track "The End of the Semester." In the interim we get a glimpse into the Worcester world of unrequited love ("No Cometas Amigo ese Error"), broken resolutions ("Alida"), and all that talk about our damn dissertations ("Worcester Love Story").

Reminiscent of The Magnetic Fields—from the cello to ukulele, kazoo and beyond—the basic, yet well-executed folk/indie-pop orchestrations carry us through the tribulations of an academic year. Clever and clear, this is a promising first album from a distinguished group of musicians. In one light, we could see the collection of all-star musicians in Los Party Killers as a continuation of the supergroups that have littered music's landscape in recent years.

However, viewing the band as a sum of parts misses the point entirely. There would

be no parties to end and no Mezz to call home if Dammert, Arond, Cantor, and Collier were simply colleagues who made an album in their spare time.

*1-800-KILL-THE-PARTY* is a conceptually unified album from a cohesive group—an honest lyrical manifesto for the GSG.

You can listen to *1-800-KILL-THE-PARTY* at: <https://soundcloud.com/lospartykillers>

—Renee Tapp

### A CUGS TRADITION REKINDLED



Last fall when Clark hosted NESTVAL, we learned from Robert Donnell (MA '71) about the tradition in the 1960s and 70s of lighting a candle during oral exams. The flame would help keep the student in the thoughts of CUGS members. After the exam, the student would return to blow out the candle. Intrigued after learning about this, we restarted the practice, eventually extending it to dissertation proposal defenses, too.

Above, Yueming Zhang blows out her candle after successfully defending her dissertation proposal in March 2014. Photo by Mireya Bravo

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West Greenland by Ashley York