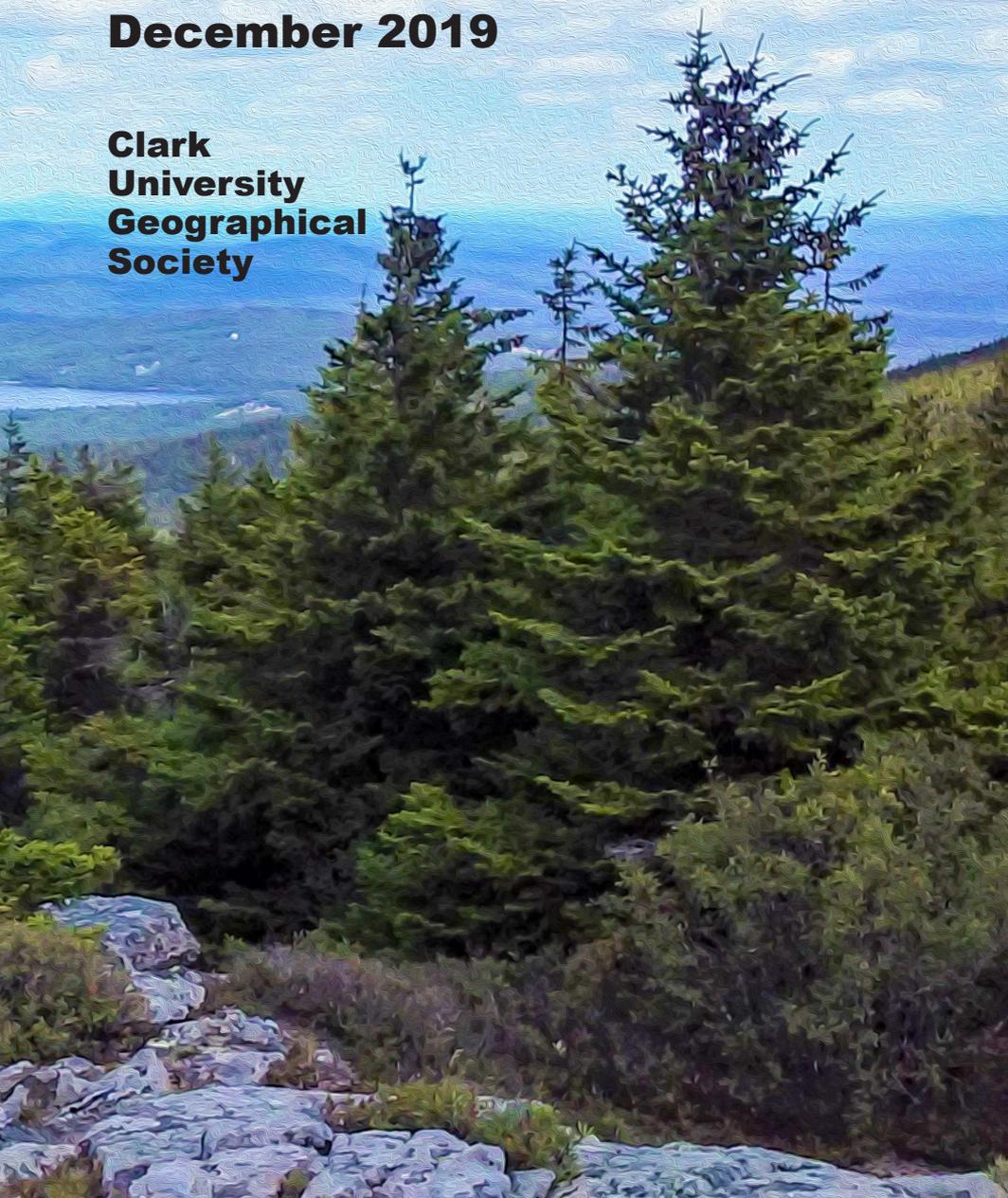


The Monadnock

Volume 61

December 2019

**Clark
University
Geographical
Society**



From the Director



Dr. Deb Martin, Director, GSG

Dear Alumni and Friends of the Graduate School of Geography (GSG):

I've been thinking somewhat recently about the nature of community, and specifically the GSG and the CUGS communities. I say communities (plural) because, as I've written in previous editions of *The Monadnock*, I recognize the important differences between the GSG—with its faculty, student, and staff constituencies forming the whole—and the community of CUGS. CUGS has a special combination of a broad temporal extent (encompassing current Ph.D. students as well as all of its Ph.D. alumni over many years), and yet simultaneously a narrow categorical membership (Ph.D. student or Ph.D. alumnus of Clark Geography). Yet CUGS' temporal breadth makes for a unique, and at times, challenging, imagined community (very much in the sense of Benedict Anderson's nations as "imagined communities").

The imagined community of CUGS is not a nation, but it is certainly sustained by communications such as *The Monadnock*. I love being able to get glimpses of the CUGS

community that is included in these pages—the photos of social events, stories from fieldwork, student successes with funding, TA experiences, and so much more. Some of the features remind me of my own graduate experiences, and yet, they also feel so very distinct to Clark Geography. They represent a snapshot of a moment of CUGS' community: a specific instantiation of CUGS now, which builds on, and shares, the temporal CUGS identity.

To enable the specific CUGS, and to sustain the broader one, takes much work, communication, and care. *The Monadnock* is first a labor of its editors, but it is also a labor of all those CUGSians who contribute photos and stories. The work of sustaining CUGS is the active product of its current members but also of its alumni. They—you—see one another at CUGS meetings, in the Mezz, at departmental events, or at the AAG and other gatherings. But also too, in courses, where thinking and communicating are both a labor of the Ph.D. program, but also of making a community: a class community which is more temporary, but fosters intersecting parts of the CUGS community.

All these overlapping, but also particular, intersections make me think of "splices." I have been working with a small group of Ph.D. students on reading and discussing legal geography this semester, and we were recently discussing Nick Blomley's¹ notion of "splices" and how they connect to David Delaney's² idea of the "nomosphere." Which is, simply to say, that we can think of CUGS and its community/ies as "splices" in two ways: firstly, as "splices" in bringing together different relationships, based on some shared identity (current or former Ph.D. students of Clark GSG), but also secondly as "splices" that overlap, intersect, and are incomplete in their relationships and commonalities. So CUGS includes alumni, who also work to nurture the identity of the community, through support of the GSG or *The Monadnock* directly, or through participation in ongoing and longstanding relationships that connect to Clark GSG.

All of this is the (imagined) CUGS community, one that has effects on our senses of self and belonging. Community takes discourse, and care, to be sustained. And so, I thank all of you for participating in the broader imaginary—and real relationships—that constitute CUGS over time and space. I know it's not easy, but it is important.

References

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A Word from the Editors

Dearest members of the Clark University Geographical Society (CUGS)—those currently in residence, those conducting fieldwork, and those who have moved on:

In putting together this volume of *The Monadnock*, we are especially mindful of departures and arrivals in the GSG. While transition and turnover are always part of any institution, Ph.D. programs and graduate schools provide ample reminders: from first-year embarkations to fifth(ish)-year graduations; from leaving for fieldwork to returning from, reflecting on, and writing about it; from early-career, visiting-faculty appointments to end-of-an-era, institution-defining faculty retirements.

And yet, despite these perennial transitions, we are also mindful of the CUGS traditions that make the Clark Geography Ph.D. program all that it is: from Field Camp to the Conceptual Potluck, from CUGS meetings in the Mezz to advocating for Ph.D. students' interests in the GSG and around the university; from candles lit to candles put out as proposals, exams, and defenses are successfully completed. As surely as CUGS and the GSG experience turnover, traditions persist, and new ones are born as CUGS and the GSG evolve.

We hope your experience perusing these pages is as reflective and rewarding as ours has been in putting them together. In reviewing and editing the contributions and photographs for this volume of *The Monadnock*, we are reminded of the wonderful people, places, and practices—past, present, and future—that make up CUGS and that make the GSG what it is. As we reflect on the past academic year, we look forward to the next one and to the future of CUGS and the GSG.

Happy reading and remembering,

Dan Santos & Mike Athay

~M



Above: Monadnock co-editors Dan Santos and Mike Athay outside Casa CUGS at the Spring 2019 Conceptual Potluck (photo courtesy of Mike Athay)

Getting to Know the Visiting Faculty: Jessa Loomis and Ross Doll



Jessa Loomis, Ph.D.
Visiting Assistant
Professor, GSG

Ross Doll, Ph.D.
Candidate (UW)
Instructor, GSG

The Monadnock: How would you describe your experience teaching in the GSG?

Jessa Loomis: I have taught in Clark's Graduate School of Geography (GSG) since 2018, and it has been a tremendous privilege to work with undergraduate and graduate students within and beyond my courses. I teach courses in our urban and economic geography cluster, and I have found the GSG to be a welcome home for my research interests and approach to teaching. At the undergraduate level, I have taught several introductory courses, including *Introduction to Economic Geography*; *American Cities*; *Global Change*, *Regional Challenges*; and *Discover Worcester*, which I am currently teaching as a field-based course as part of Clark's first-year intensive program. I have also enjoyed teaching mixed-level undergraduate and graduate courses, including *Geographies of Poverty and Inequality* and a semester-long writing workshop for senior thesis writers and graduate students preparing manuscripts for publication. These mixed-level seminars are a unique feature of the GSG, and I have found them to be generative for all involved. Introducing students to key geographical concepts has been immensely rewarding, and it has been a pleasure to mentor and advise Clark students.

Ross Doll: I have had the honor of teaching two courses: *The Political and Economic Geographies of Resource Development*, and *Economic Growth in Global Contexts*. It's been a wonderful experience. I moved here in October of 2018, which was only a month after I had just finished a year of fieldwork in rural China. Added to that, I was moving from my long-time home in Seattle. So, the transition to Worcester was a bit head-spinning. But the Graduate School of Geography community was and has been really wonderful. There have been so many times when community members have gone well out of their way to make me feel welcome and supported. That

has really meant a great deal to me under the circumstances. My undergrad students have also left a strongly positive impression. I'm amazed by their enthusiasm, dedication and insight. They are so much more aware and active than I was at their age. And surprisingly patient with me, which is very important when one is adjusting to a new environment, new classroom technology, and administrative systems. I've given them a few opportunities to practice their patience.

M: Could you each briefly describe your current research?

JL: I am a critical human geographer working in the areas of urban, economic, and feminist geographies. My research agenda is broadly concerned with the everyday geographies of global finance. In particular, my work examines the ongoing financialization of the economy by focusing on the relationship between macroeconomic change and everyday life. In my work, I primarily employ qualitative methods, including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, surveys, focus groups, and discourse analysis to trace the quotidian practices that circulate, valorize, and normalize social and economic change. For example, my doctoral research focused on the recent efforts to "democratize" finance and promote financial inclusion in the United States. By examining the role of nonprofit financial coaching programs in shaping the financial behaviors of low and moderate-income (LMI) urban residents, my research shows how the seemingly benevolent impulse to include the financially excluded is a more complicated project of debt expansion among nonprofit organizations, the state, and the financial services industry.

I currently have two collaborative projects underway that explore different dimensions of the inequalities produced by finance-led growth. The first project, in collaboration with Dr. Caitlin Henry at the University of Manchester (UK), examines private equity investment in outpatient healthcare centers and provides a feminist analysis of the spatial and financial strategies used to extract value from spaces of care. The second project, in conjunction with an interdisciplinary group of scholars in the US and UK, examines a recent spate of mergers and closures in the higher education sector and explores how higher education institutions (HEIs) manage the threat posed by institutional financial instability. This research asks whether strategies employed to manage financial risk may enhance or, paradoxically, undermine the financial security of the communities in which these HEIs are embedded.

RD: I study agrarian change and rural development in China. For my current project,

I'm looking at the Chinese central government's ongoing agricultural modernization campaign. The state is spending hundreds of billions of dollars to rapidly expand the scale of industrialized grain production in China. Leadership argues this will both improve food security and help rural people to transition to higher paying non-agricultural work. The scale of this project is enormous. Somewhere around 600 million people in China depend on agriculture for some part of their livelihoods. So this modernization campaign has enormous implications for China's society and ecology. I'm interested in how, why, and to what effect the campaign reshapes the countryside. I'm particularly interested in the role of discourse and narrative. For example, I find that central leaders rationalize the modernization policy by describing the countryside as a whole as desperate and poor. Rural officials in my field site in turn draw on this discourse to legitimize work to coerce villagers into handing over their land to large-scale farmers, essentially using pressure campaigns to make villages into the places imagined to already exist. At the same time, in villages that have a different understanding of what rural China "naturally" is, villagers ground their resistance in narratives that draw on powerful, central experiences. In direct and indirect ways, storytelling is essential to understanding this transformation. From this, we can see that what appear to be inevitable, grand-scale transitions are in fact the aggregate of countless negotiations among people in a place with a specific history.

M: What advocacy and research opportunities do you see for early-career geographers?

JL: It is an exciting time to be a geographer; early-career scholars are pushing the boundaries of geographic thought by researching some of the most pressing issues of our time, including focusing on the carceral state, housing access and affordability, climate change, surveillance and security technologies, and bordering practices and migration. In my own research areas, I see a growing interest in questions of the financial mechanisms of displacement and dispossession, and I see opportunities for research and advocacy around the incursion of finance into every part of life. In particular, urban and economic geographers are making significant contributions to interdisciplinary scholarship on the social studies of finance, including through offering empirically rich and theoretically nuanced scholarship that demystifies the "magic" of finance. Finally, new scholars may find it generative to look inwards at our own academic practice and the institutions where we work. My co-authored publications on the history and future of the subdiscipline of economic geography and my next project on

higher education institutions and financial uncertainty are just some examples of internal engagement that can be very productive and signal a new vision for academic practice and collaboration.

RD: There is so much great work being done, and so much room for more contributions. I'm interested in work around sustainable development policy initiatives: how states work to design and implement plans with seemingly contradictory goals; the political, economic and administrative factors shaping outcomes; the influence of sustainability discourses on things like land use and spatial awareness. I'm planning a follow-up project in China on this topic. Clearly, work related to climate change and migration is particularly important now. Geographers have an important role to play in highlighting the need for a relational understanding of the problems we face, and thus the need for dynamic, adaptive solutions. I'm particularly inspired by the work that takes creative approaches to challenge commonplace past-present, nature-society, us-them divides. Political ecology-inspired work in visual methodologies like GIS and remote sensing, or using creative writing, for example. These have the potential to shock, to inspire, to reach wider audiences. I hope to incorporate similar approaches in the future, so obviously this work has inspired me, at least.

M: What do you do away from scholarship?

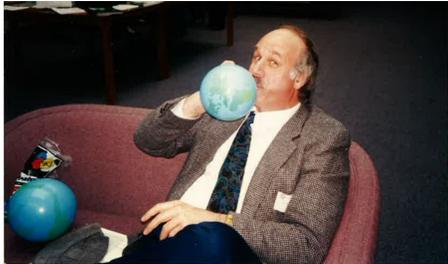
JL: The Blue Hills, Wachusett Mountain, and the Cascades are some of my favorite places to walk in the woods, and given ample time and a desirable destination, I will walk for hours around any city. As students in my writing workshop know, I also enjoy reading fiction and believe that academics should spend more time reading for pleasure. I recently finished Elena Ferrante's *Neapolitan* series, and I welcome suggestions for what I should read next!

RD: I do a good amount of running, though I don't know if I would call it fun. Running for me is always a mix of joy and wishing I was doing almost anything else. But I'm always glad that I did it in the end. It brings me into contact with a wider world, reminding me that my body does more than carry my head around, forces me to shut my brain off for a bit. I always come away with clearer and broader perspective, which makes me feel better. And if that isn't enough, it makes me better at geography. I also like listening to music, which can have a similar effect. Keeping up with music used to be very important to me, but the 22 year-old me would be ashamed of how lame and out of touch I am now. So any suggestions would be appreciated! ~M

Retiring Faculty: Sam Ratick



Above: Sam with former TAs for *Intermediate Quantitative Methods* (from L-R: Guy Hydrick, Su Ye, William Collier)
Below: Sam blowing up a globe balloon (photos courtesy of GSG)



Professor Sam Ratick earned his Ph.D. in Geography and Environmental Engineering from Johns Hopkins University. He arrived at Clark University in 1987, and throughout his time at Clark he held appointments in both the GSG and IDCE (International Development, Community and Environment). He was also the Director of the Center for Technology, Environment, and Development (CENTED), which eventually became the George Perkins Marsh Institute. His research and teaching interests revolved around developing and applying analytical and mathematical tools for environmental assessment and policy, resource management, and risks and hazard assessment. He also consulted for various organizations and agencies.

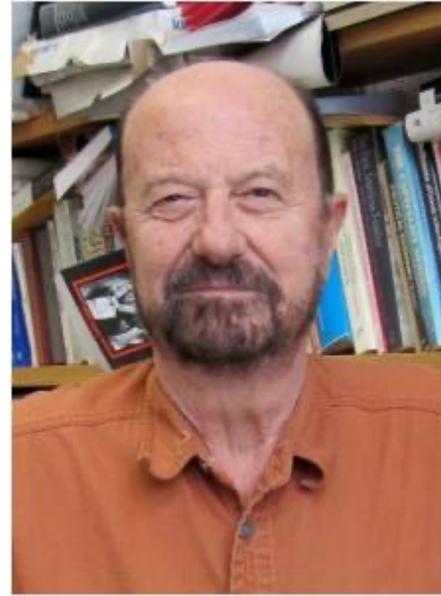
Below: GSG Director Deb Martin (top) and IDCE Director Ed Carr (bottom) speak at Sam's retirement party in May 2019 (photos courtesy of Mike Athay)



Below: The two R's: John Rogan and Sam Ratick (photo courtesy of GSG)



Retiring Faculty: Dick Peet



Above: Dick in his office at Clark
Right: Dick speaking at the Clark party at the 2017 AAG in Boston
Below: Dick with Clark human-environment geographers James McCarthy (far left) and Dianne Rocheleau (far right) (photos courtesy of the GSG)

Professor Richard "Dick" Peet earned his Ph.D. in Geography from the University of California, Berkeley in 1967 and joined the faculty in the GSG at Clark later that year. During his career, he has published numerous books and articles and founded and/or edited multiple academic journals, including *Antipode*, *Human Geography*, and *Economic Geography*. In the discipline, he is best known for his significant contributions in critical Marxist political, economic, and development geographies as well as in political ecology. Among graduate students and alumni, he is also known as the longtime instructor of Geography 318, *Explanation in Geography*, a graduate seminar of his creation where he has left his mark on generations of Clark geographers. ~M



2018 Atwood Lecture: Cathy Whitlock

Review by Dylan Harris

The Graduate School of Geography welcomed Professor Cathy Whitlock to deliver the annual Wallace W. Atwood Lecture in Fall 2018. Dr. Whitlock is a Regents Professor at Montana State University (MSU), where she is also the Director of the MSU Paleoecology Lab. Among her many awards and achievements, she became a member of the National Academy of Sciences in 2018 and has recently been nominated for MSU's 125 "Extraordinary Ordinary" Women as part of their 125th anniversary celebrations.

Professor Whitlock is trained in earth system sciences, focusing mainly on paleoecology; however, her work also spans a number of other fields, including conservation, vegetation and fire history, climate change, and more recently climate communication. Her lecture entitled "Paleoecology, Climate Change, and Conservation" provided an overview of ways that paleoecology can help better inform present-day conversation practices and future decisions regarding conservation and climate change.

Professor Whitlock's lecture was divided into two sections. First, she discussed how a better understanding of paleoecological records, which give us an idea about past climates, can better inform conservation efforts in the present. These records can come from a variety of sources (e.g., speleothems, bones, soils, diatoms), but, because of her location in Montana, she mostly works with lake sediment cores and tree ring data. To further explain the relationship between paleoecology and conservation, Professor Whitlock discussed three projects that she has been involved with: evergreen oak conservation in Sicily, southern beech/podocarp forests in New Zealand, and white pine forests in the greater Yellowstone area. In sum, whereas conservation efforts in the present typically focus on what species are doing now in order to predict their future, Professor Whitlock shows how paleoecological records can help conservationists make better decisions about the future using a richer understanding of the past. However, as she notes, discussing the future is impossible without considering climate change.

The second part of Professor Whitlock's lecture focused on conservation efforts in

Montana, a place with large swaths of intact ecosystems, a rapidly changing climate, and considerable amounts of climate skepticism. In 2017, she led a team that published the first Montana Climate Assessment (MCA). The project is the first localized assessment of projected climate impacts for Montana based on stakeholder input from various communities across the state. She then gave an overview of the projected climate change impacts in Montana, using paleoecological information as a way of discussing how past changes can help better predict future change. Though future predictions of climate change are relatively dire, Professor Whitlock concluded her lecture on a hopeful note. She discussed conversations she has had with people across the state regarding the MCA, noting specific ways that climate change is taking place but also how people have been responding, and can continue to respond, to these changes. For example, dryland agriculture is an important part of Montana's economy, and dry summers will impact the state's ability to produce its wheat crops. Based on feedback from the MCA, there is now lots of work being done to diversify crops for future resilience. This is just one of the hopeful examples Professor Whitlock mentions that has come about as a result of the MCA.

Overall, I found Professor Whitlock's lecture to be engaging, insightful, and promising. I am drawn to the applied nature of her work and am encouraged to see that she has managed to make significant headway in climate planning in a state that is relatively "opposed" to climate science and policy. A couple ideas specifically resonated with me.

First, I appreciated her discussion of landscape use and conservation. As a political ecologist, I am trained to see conservation as almost-always problematic in some way, and many of these problems stem from conservationists' views of nature as something "pristine." Professor Whitlock began her conversation about conservation by noting that there are hardly any landscapes on the planet that have not already been impacted by humans. She incorporates human impacts into her conservation work in a way that I find to be refreshing and, seemingly, more helpful.

Second, as someone who also studies climate communication in regions and with people who are skeptical of climate change science, I really appreciated how she approached discussing climate change with communities in

Montana. Specifically, I found something she mentioned almost off-handedly to be incredibly profound: people tend to pay attention to local problems and not care as much about global issues. Despite how much I—or any other person studying climate change—may want people to care about global climate change, it is imperative to start with localized issues. Our job as scholars and teachers, then, is to find ways to connect those local issues

meaningfully to the global context of climate change, and Professor Whitlock has begun doing this hard work.

More about Professor Whitlock's research can be found on her website (<https://sites.google.com/site/msupaleoecologylab/>), and more information about the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment can be found at <http://montana-climate.org/>. ~M

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY INVITES YOU TO ATTEND

THE WALLACE W. ATWOOD LECTURE
Cathy Whitlock
PALEOECOLOGY, CLIMATE CHANGE, AND
CONSERVATION

In the face of changing climate, the relevance of the past as a baseline for assessing the future and for conservation planning becomes ever more problematic.

My talk focuses on the past and future of the Greater Yellowstone region, one of the last intact ecosystems in temperate latitudes. Paleoecology provides insight into the evolution of the Yellowstone ecosystem in response to past climate variations but to what extent do rising temperatures, more fires, and decreased water supplies at present exceed the range of historical variability and our notions of resilience? I'll share our efforts to engage a rural, politically conservative populace on the topic of climate and ecological change by drawing on shared concerns for this extraordinary region.

PM | TUESDAY | NOV. 6TH | TILTON HALL

CATHY WHITLOCK is a professor of Earth Sciences at Montana State University and a fellow of the Montana Institute on Ecosystems. Her research interests focus on long-term climate and ecological change, and she has spent the last 40 years studying the environmental history of the Greater Yellowstone as well as comparable large landscapes in New Zealand, Tasmania, and Patagonia. Dr. Whitlock has co-authored over 200 scientific publications and trained over 40 graduate students in her field. She is also the lead author of the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment. Dr. Whitlock is a fellow of the Geological Society of America and the Association for the Advancement of Science, and she was recently elected to the National Academy of Sciences—the first person from a Montana university to receive this honor.

This event is free and open to the public and sponsored by the Graduate School of Geography. For information, contact Matt [redacted]

Meet CUGS



Above: First Year Ph.D. Students, Fall 2018, from left to right: Nathaniel Strosberg, Amy Dundon, Clare Gaffey, Jessica Craig, Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff, and Mwangi Chege

We prompted the current Second Years to reflect on their first academic year (2018-2019) by asking them a few questions. Their responses have been collated and edited.

The Monadnock: Three words to describe your first year?

Amy Dundon: disorienting, productive, didactic

Mwangi Chege: exciting, overwhelming, exhausting

Nathaniel Strosberg: quick, challenging, illuminating

Three words to describe CUGS?

Clare Gaffey: solidarity, camaraderie, inter-connection

Jessica Craig: keeps me alive

NS: helpful, friendly, engaged

M: *Do you have an especially memorable moment of your first year that you wouldn't mind sharing?*

AD: I went to several conferences during my first year. Among those I attended, Dimensions Of Political Ecology (DOPE) in Lexington, KY, and (anti)Blackness in the American Metropolis in Baltimore, MD, stand out. In Baltimore, I saw activist and author Jackie Wang speak alongside a former member of

the Baltimore Black Panther Party for Self Defense, Eddie Conway. I was struck by the content that pairing produced: each spoke about time—in particular carceral/inside time and the weaponization of time. As I listened, I heard vibrant theoretical avenues open up, theory full of resistance. I felt unsettled and inspired.

CG: Overall, I had a great time during my first year at Clark! I found myself in a cold place with warm people who came from all over the world and had varying experiences and interests outside my own. I love the tradition of “CUGS buddies,” so Lei [Song] and Li [Xi] have to be my friends no matter what! Meeting each of my buddies at field camp are some of my favorite CUGS-oriented memories.

JC: This one's hard because my first year felt like a string of little moments, not really memorable in the long run but so meaningful in the moment. One general thing that stands out is taking classes with my cohort—maybe it's because we're small, but I think we all learned a lot about each other during Geography 368 [Development of Western Geographical Thought] in particular. I also do miss our weekly post-368 Annie's brunches (did we ever get our picture on their wall?). Beyond that, the various CUGS-organized events were quite fun and memorable. Selfishly, the

one I remember most was the Conceptual Potluck, since I ended up winning the concept category (!), but the Halloween party was also very fun.

MC: There were several, but one that comes to mind now is having a class at Youjin Chung's house in the spring semester. We all squeezed into Nick [Geron]'s tiny car to get to her house, and the banter was outrageous—it seemed like an episode from Mr. Bean. Also, Youjin was a really gracious host, but what else would you expect?

NS: As we were getting our feet wet in this new, intense environment, I enjoyed our trips to Annie's after Deb's class [Geography 368]. It was a great time to decompress and get acquainted.

M: *What are your research interests, and how did your first year influence (consolidate? change? challenge?) these interests?*

AD: I'm interested in understanding how particular social institutions re/produce logics of white supremacy. I'm thinking specifically about higher education and carceral space, and the role of debt in racialized accumulation by dispossession. In my first year, conversations I had at conferences, things I read, discussions with my adviser, and select coursework gave me new theory and language to think through my project.

CG: Arriving at Clark, my research interests revolved around using unmanned aerial vehicles for analyzing glacial processes and atmospheric feedbacks. Based on experiences during my research assistantship, I have switched my sights to the Arctic Ocean. There are a lot of changes happening in the Arctic, making it a critical and fascinating area to study. I am still looking at climate-cryosphere-biosphere interactions—only the setting has changed.

JC: I was admitted to Clark with a very different research agenda—I don't even remember what it was exactly, but I wanted to look at the social vulnerability dimensions of climate change-exacerbated natural hazards, particularly flooding. Over my first year I was, as my mom would say, “fed Marxist theory” and became interested in the local articulations of broader political-economic processes. In particular, I'm now thinking about discourses around renewable energy in terms of how sites for solar projects are selected and how this impacts gendered divisions of labor.

MC: The first year muddled what I thought were my research interests by exposing me to lots of different ideas. I haven't settled on a new topic yet. But this past summer I was struck by how much we need to rethink our approaches to informality, especially in cities of the Global South, so I will likely be headed along that route.

NS: I entered the program quite interested in urban geography, and specifically, exploring the socio-economic factors that divide the urban fabric and the opportunities for promoting more social cohesiveness. During Mark Davidson's *Critical Theory* class, I was excited to explore these interests in the context of postmodern architecture. Beyond this, my first year challenged some of the core perspectives and beliefs associated with my interests, and my views have evolved as a result.

M: *What are you looking forward to, and what do you hope to achieve, in your second year?*

CG: My goals for my second year at Clark include learning about the Arctic and beginning meaningful research in the field while supporting fellow CUGSians on all of our various academic journeys.

JC: My second year feels much busier than my first, but I also feel more settled in the program, less frantic—I know myself more, know how to organize my time and energy, how to balance time spent in my office with time living in the real world, and so it feels better. One big goal this year is to secure funding for research, so I'm working on a fellowship proposal now. I'm also trying to be more socially and politically active and have been thinking a lot about how best to align my actions with my values. Finally, compared to last year, I already miss classes with my cohort a little, but it's exciting to see everyone's research and thoughts evolve, and so I look forward to the next few years here. I think the best years are yet to come.

MC: Hopefully, I'll lock down my research focus, learn a lot, share a lot.

NS: I hope to continue to broaden my understanding of the discipline and its relationship with my interests, and also to develop a specific focus for my dissertation. There's something about the intensity that is quite addictive, and I'm looking forward to it!

~M

Reflections from the Field

Ruminations on Tradition, Conservation, and Tourism in South Africa

By Alex Moulton

In these notes from the field, I reflect on a "rapid appraisal" research trip to South Africa. The trip was undertaken with funding from and support of the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCdT), a non-governmental organization tasked with the management of the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park and UNESCO World Heritage Site in Jamaica. The trip was part of a Jamaica-South Africa Bilateral Research Project concerned with "Agrobiodiversity, Indigenous Knowledge and Protected Area Management" in Jamaica and South Africa. Here, I share thoughts on observations and a number of interviews conducted in Okhahlamba-Drakensberg (Southern Research Region) and Hluhluwe and Maputland (Northern Research Region) of KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa between October 23 and November 2, 2018.

I travel to South Africa with the Executive Director of the JCdT. We are being hosted by a team of researchers at The University of Zululand, located in Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. The campus is surrounded by trees. Indeed, the entire region is. These trees are part of the forest plantations that dominate the landscape. And where there are not stands of trees, often I can see sugar cane plantations. The Eucalyptus, Pine, and Black Wattle are striking in their ordered arrangements. Beyond the edge of the trees there is no light. For all the trees standing tall and the ones springing up there is not much sense of growth. The tight matrix is meant to maximize profit. It does not invite exploration. The pattern has stifled undergrowth and rather than biodiversity—a self-organizing ecology—this is the first phase in an assembly line for paper products. The geometry insists that the stands of trees be understood as an "unnatural" ensemble staged for the maximization of profit. Nature is produced, for profit. James C. Scott's discussion of these kinds of schemes in *Seeing Like a State*¹ offers a robust examination of the logics informing these modernist ventures. The companies that run these paper factories have to engage with traditional leaders. The historical context cannot be fully rehearsed here, but in this region Zulu heritage remains strong. The political pantheon includes not only elected officials,

but the Zulu King, Inkosi or Amakhosi, and iziDuna. The specter of the ancestors' informs a whole host of practices that reproduce the community. Round houses—rondavels—function as the gogo house—the grandmothers' house. A younger generation refer to these traditional houses as the "Google house." The new designation effectively compares the practice of going into the gogo house to seek advice from the ancestors or the elders with the use of Internet search engines. It is in this room that the mother, as the individual so tasked, will seek counsel from the ancestors and perform a number of rituals for the family's wellbeing.

Of course, culture changes. It adapts new practices and new technical vocabularies. And cultural objects are adapted. The accommodations at Didima Camp Cathedral Peak have incorporated/appropriated/adapted the traditional design. The landscape at the foothills of the Drakensberg are a stark contrast to the dramatic mountains that are recognized by UNESCO as part of the World's Heritage. The mountains loom ominously as a space of whiteness and neoliberalization of nature. The conservation/protection/expropriation of the area reproduces nature as commodity and implicates the consumption of the natural landscape in an array of economic activities (around accommodations and lodgings tours and sightseeing). I am a participant and a critic. I have little say over where we stay. But neither did I complain about how nice things were. The mountain and the economic activities it fosters overshadows the foothills. While the tourist economy thrives and provides some jobs to a few persons of color, the majority in the foothills are not beneficiaries. At one resort, too expensive for the team to stay, the staff reside in barracks. Accommodations that seem like an encampment for the housing of black/brown people. The barracks allow the selective deployment and withdrawal of the black/brown laboring bodies as instruments of touristic pleasure. The dry savanna is a patchwork though, and not just in degrees of brownness, with or without grass. Few green patches with tractors punctuate the landscape. The patches are located near lakes, are fenced, and feature homesteads. These ranches instantiate the accumulation by dispossession that undergirded apartheid in South Africa. The mosaic of brown dry land and green fertile land is an afterlife of apartheid.



Above: Photos from field work in South Africa (courtesy of Alex Moulton)

In *Give a Man a Fish*², James Ferguson outlines a new politics of distribution and explicates the notion of the "rightful share." The arguments of the book are based on Ferguson's long-term interest in the anthropology of development across southern Africa. The notion of the rightful share which he thinks through the social welfare programs of the region from Botswana to South Africa seems well-suited to inform a new politics of care and distribution that could radically shift the fortunes of communities near and around

the protected areas and nature-based tourist resorts.

References

1. Scott, J. C. (1998). *Seeing like a state: How certain schemes to improve the human condition have failed*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
2. Ferguson, J. (2015). *Give a man a fish: Reflections on the new politics of distribution*. Durham: Duke University Press.

~M

Progress to the Ph.D.: Degrees and Milestones in Academic Year 2018 – 2019

Degrees Conferred

Doctoral

Nathan Gill (August 2018)
Young-Long Kim (August 2018)
Renee Tapp (December 2018)

M.A. en route to Ph.D.

Jacob Chamberlain (Dec 2018)
Ben Fash (Dec 2018)
Patrick Mutegeki (Dec 2018)
Dan Santos (Aug 2019)
Kristen Shake (May 2019)
Su Ye (Aug 2019)
Yu Zhou (Aug 2019)

Progress-to-Degree Milestones

Dissertation Defenses

8/21/2018 – Renee Tapp
2/26/2019 – Patrick Bright Mutegeki
2/27/2019 – Kristen Shake
4/15/2019 – Laura Sauls
5/7/2019 – Will Collier
5/14/2019 – Ali Santacruz Delgado

5/16/2019 – David Lukens
6/21/2019 – Ashley York
6/27/2019 – Carlos Dobler

Doctoral Examinations (Orals)

9/4/2018 – Ben Fash
9/6/2018 – Guy Hydrick
10/15/2018 – Jacob Chamberlain
5/8/2019 – Mario Machado
5/13/2019 – Su Ye
5/13/2019 – Jaclyn Guz
5/16/2019 – Mara van den Bold
5/17/2019 – Helen Rosko
5/22/2019 – Brittany Wheeler
5/22/2019 – Dan Santos

Dissertation Proposal Defenses

1/16/2019 – Mario Machado
1/31/2019 – Helen Rosko
3/1/2019 – Roopa Krithivasan
3/21/2019 – Dan Santos
4/18/2019 – Mara van den Bold
6/5/2019 – Sam Khallaghi

Reflections about Clark

Several recent CUGS graduates answer some questions about favorite classes, memorable moments, and future research directions.

The Monadnock: Please provide a brief description of your research interests and what your dissertation was about.

William Collier: My research explores the relationships between political-economic systems, social institutions, and the environment to better understand how power relations and the uneven distribution of resources influence social and environmental change. In my dissertation, I challenge some of the common narratives associated with forest loss and conservation in Kenya's largest water catchment, the Mau Forests Complex. Focusing on distributive politics and governance regimes, I use historical and conjunctural approaches to examine the role of commodity production networks and conservation narratives in shaping forest geographies and ecologies.

While I continue to conduct research in Kenya, I am also developing new research projects focusing on environmental conflicts around food, water, and energy in the rural U.S. South. Several immediate projects will explore (i) political conflicts surrounding failed attempts to establish farmers markets in the rural South and (ii) the role of glebes in coastal land use in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. Working with students at my current institution, as well as collaborators in the region, I also plan to develop projects on energy transitions in Appalachia and the environmental impacts of cannabis legalization in the United States.

Laura Sauls: I am a human-environment geographer focused on questions of multi-scalar governance of natural resources, especially related to processes of institutional change in Indigenous and historically marginalized territories. My dissertation examined how international climate change mitigation policies (specifically related to Reducing Emissions of Deforestation and Forest Degradation) intersect with forest communities' land and resource rights claims in Central America (with Guatemala and Honduras as case studies). Along with colleagues, I am also involved in research projects on the impacts of extractive industries and of illicit economies on natural resources governance.

Kristen Shake: My research interests at

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Clark centered around Pacific-Arctic sea ice dynamics and legal geography. Essentially, I researched how shifting sea ice conditions in Alaska (U.S. Arctic) impact resource issues.

M: What was your favorite class at Clark, and why?

WC: I have three favorite courses from my time at Clark: James McCarthy's *Capitalist Natures*, Tony Bebbington's *Development's Geographies*, and Jim Murphy's *Africa's Development in Global Context*. Each of these courses contributed significantly to my understanding of key conceptual and methodological approaches in geographic thought, a field to which I had limited exposure before arriving at Clark. Perhaps even more importantly than the material in these courses, however, was having the opportunity to see the pedagogical approaches and techniques of these three academics as they engaged with students. I learned a tremendous amount from observing the ways that James, Tony, and Jim interacted with students, explained course material and readings, and challenged students to create, critique, and expand upon ideas in these courses. My pedagogical approach as a professor is heavily influenced by these experiences, and I recognize what a privilege it was to learn from each of them.

LS: Honestly, I loved the reading for Jody Emel's *Feminism, Nature, Culture* class, as well as her honest way of running things—transparent, open, sometimes blunt. It was a big class, with some MA and upper-level undergraduates in it as well, but we managed to have some fantastic discussions about books and papers I probably should have read years ago. Also, I cannot not mention that without Denise Humphreys Bebbington's *Environment and Justice in Latin America* class, I would not have ended up with my dissertation project! I was initially skeptical of taking an IDCE class (in what was my first semester), but it ended up being fantastic—and life-changing, if you will.

KS: I have two: Tony Bebbington's *Development of Western Geographical Thought* with my cohort and Jody Emel's *Feminism, Nature, Culture*. I thoroughly enjoyed these two classes for similar reasons: I had NEVER taken a course like them before in my prior educational career! Tony's class was really the proving ground for my cohort to get to know each other, argue together, and work collectively. Jody's class I took on a lark, and it ended up being one of the most engaging courses with

some of the most interesting topics that I've ever taken—so much so that the foundation that I obtained from that course is now informing my professional career!

M: Share a memory or two from your time at Clark that you think you'll remember and re-tell years from now.

WC: My fondest memories at Clark almost always involve my relationships with CUGS and the faculty at Clark. I have a profound respect and appreciation for the sense of community within CUGS and the Clark GSG, and it is certainly those relationships and moments of shared struggles and successes that helped me get through what was a challenging graduate experience. Specifically, I think that our annual CUGS Halloween traditions were some of my favorite experiences, as those were always opportunities where I got to see many of my friends and colleagues in situations and settings that I would not have anticipated. I was always surprised with the tremendous creativity and enthusiasm in which CUGS shared some especially fun, weird, and shared juxtapositions.

LS: Probably a typical, classic CUGS memory: my first field camp, and the night Chris Knud-

son told us the history of field camp and the department's plane lost over Puerto Rico.... Fact? Fiction? Does it matter? We also did cohort trust falls off a stump, which maybe wasn't the best idea given that 70% of us had definitely been drinking.

I think I will also re-tell stories about all the fantastic potlucks and themed parties we had—Chinese New Year, Persian New Year, Liquor-treat, Conceptual Potluck. These kinds of events just really bonded us all together—and I ate some fabulous food!

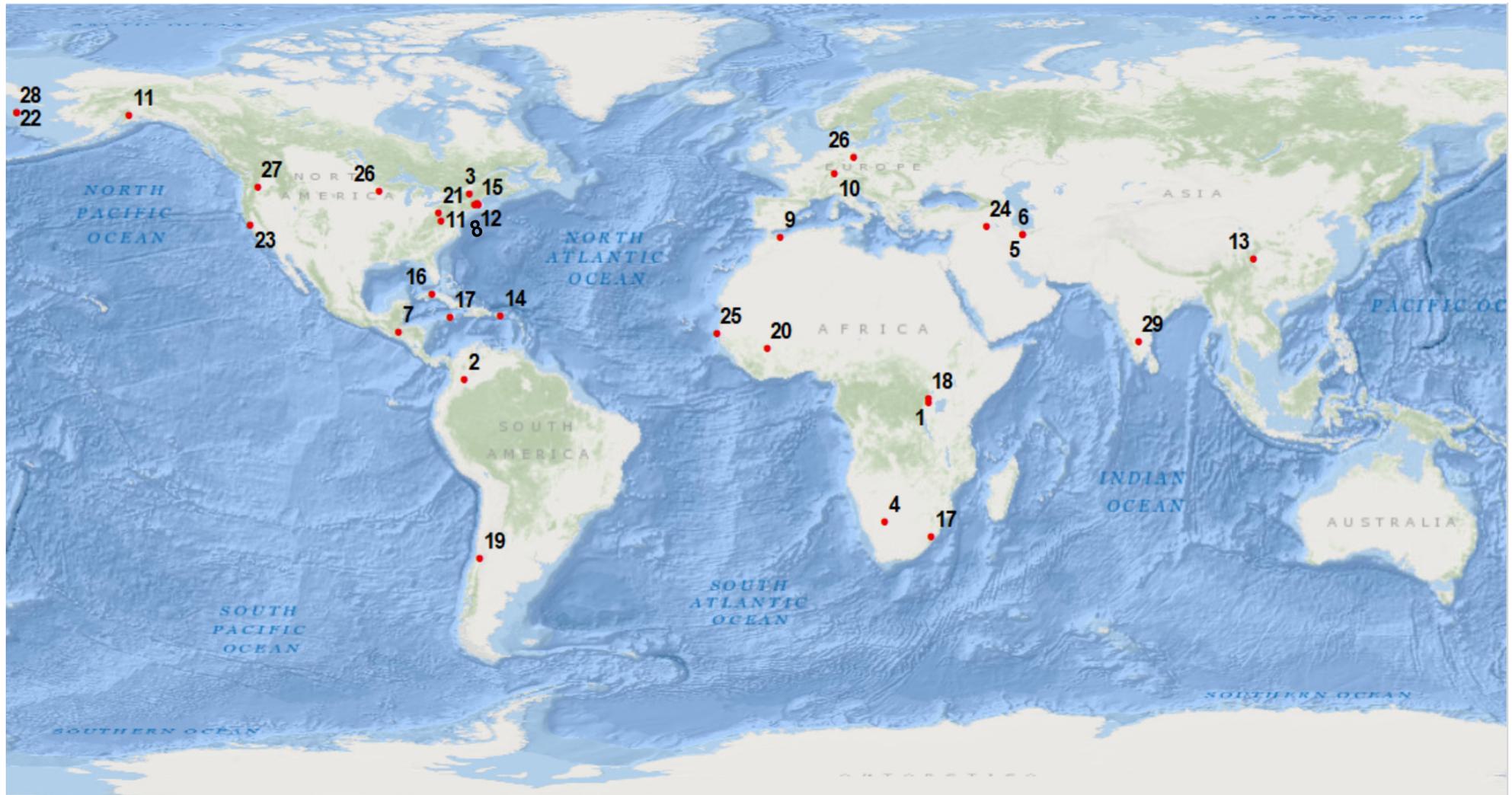
KS: I think a key memory that I can share that doesn't involve too many shenanigans would be the formation of our cross-cohort musical group "The Party Killers!" This was especially dear to my heart because my husband, who was not a Ph.D. student but a GISDE MS student while I was at Clark, played in the band, so it was a very cool way for him to share in my experiences with the cohorts. We had some amazingly talented musicians in the 2012 and 2013 cohort—Elisa Arond, Juan Luis Dammert, Will Collier, my husband Nelson Crone—and we created original songs that honored CUGS and Worcester life all

(continues on p. 18)



Above: The 2015 Conceptual Potluck (photo courtesy of Kristen Shake)

Research Sites of Current Doctoral Students



1. **Bernadette Arakwiye**, Albertine Rift Biodiversity Hotspot, East Africa
 2. **Elisa Arond**, Bogota, Colombia
 3. **Jacob Chamberlain**, Burlington, Vermont
 4. **Janae Davis**, Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park
 5. **Azadeh Esfahani**, Tehran, Iran
 6. **Alireza Farahani**, Tehran, Iran
 7. **Benjamin Fash**, Copán Ruinas, Honduras
 8. **Nick Geron**, Elm Park, Worcester
 9. **Leslie Gross-Wyrtzen**, Fes, Morocco
 10. **Jackie Guz**, Davos, Switzerland

11. **Dylan Harris**, Anchorage, AK; Circleville, WV
 12. **Marc Healy**, Massachusetts (multiple cities)
 13. **Wenjing Jiang**, Sichuan, People's Republic of China
 14. **Richard Kruger**, San Juan, Puerto Rico
 15. **Son Ca Lam**, Dorchester, MA
 16. **Mario Machado**, Matanzas, Cuba
 17. **Alex Moulton**, Jamaica; KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

18. **Patrick Mutegeki**, Kabarole District, Uganda
 19. **Scott Odell**, Santiago, Chile
 20. **Helen Rosko**, Sikasso, Mali
 21. **Sarah SanGiovanni**, Pittsburgh, PA
 22. **Melishia Santiago**, Bering Sea
 23. **Dan Santos**, Bay Area, CA
 24. **Kaner Turker**, Northern Kurdistan, Turkey
 25. **Mara van den Bold**, Senegal
 26. **Michelle Wenderlich**, Minneapolis, MN; Berlin, Germany

27. **Yu Zhou**, Harvard Forest, MA; Pacific Northwest
 28. **Clare Gaffey**, Bering Sea
 29. **Mike Athay**, Bangalore, India

Map by Sam Khallaghi, based on a partial CUGS survey conducted in Fall 2019. Base map was sourced from National Geographic.

~M

(continued from p. 15)

in one. My favorite single that we recorded was an ode to the gross, yellow bag, trash-strewn streets of Worcester, where they don't let people use their own trash cans, but instead require residents to buy yellow plastic bags as a way to try and reduce waste. The consequences are that a) people won't pay for trash pick-up, and b) the yellow bags get eaten by critters; the title of the song was "Trash Juice," and it really paints an accurate picture of the situation! It was just so fun to have a creative outlet for us all, and I will always remember those times jamming in our apartment on Oberlin St. very fondly.

M: What do you think you might miss about CUGS?

WC: The camaraderie and friendships of CUGS will be something I miss dearly. I developed some incredibly close friendships with members of CUGS and shared with those individuals some of the most vulnerable moments of my life while at Clark. The friendships I developed with CUGS—and the support I received from these friends—are something I will cherish and carry with me for the remainder of my life. On a professional level, I always appreciated the collective

support I received from CUGS as I developed ideas for my dissertation, prepared for my comprehensive exams, applied for grants, received rejection letters, and tried to keep my head above water as I navigated the demands of life as a doctoral student. The sense of community at Clark, centered around CUGS, was the defining experience of my doctoral matriculation.

LS: Might miss? Already miss...the people. I'm lucky to still be in Worcester to get to see some of the current members of CUGS, but most of my cohort (as well as the ones right before and after mine) are no longer here. CUGS has its dramas, but just having a space where you can always expect to find someone who will understand at least some of what you're going through on the professional-personal front, and who is willing to go on an adventure or proofread your work, depending on the day, is an amazing thing.

KS: I miss the constant mental stimulation and being surrounded by high functioning, interesting people I could have interesting conversations with. Both my husband and I absolutely loved being immersed in that atmosphere!



Above: Hadwen Arboretum—a Clark treasure! (photo courtesy of Laura Sauls)

M: Do you have any advice for current and future CUGS?

WC: I'll summarize my advice in a few brief points. Some of these I feel I did fairly well, others I did not: (1) Stay organized and focused, and think about how everything that you do can, or cannot, be used to develop your dissertation and prepare you for the steps you will take after leaving Clark. There are a lot of trade-offs to be made with your limited time and energy, so try to be mindful and intentional about how you prepare yourself for your future goals. (2) Have mechanisms for self-care, and develop relationships with CUGS and other members of the Clark and Worcester communities that you can depend upon when things get difficult, which they most certainly will. (3) Take advantage of the incredible mentors at Clark who will give you tremendous amounts of time and support. (4) Be a part of the CUGS community, and lend your advice and labor to others when you can. While this might not necessarily help you finish your dissertation, for me, helping others succeed was as important as my own success, and it became a key component of my personal strategy for self-care. (5) Engage in the amazing opportunities that Clark GSG provides to be a part of the governance structure of the program and institution. Like other things, this takes time away from your dissertation, and thus involves

finding a balance, but these opportunities are rare in doctoral programs and can prepare you well for transitioning to life as a professor following your matriculation at Clark.

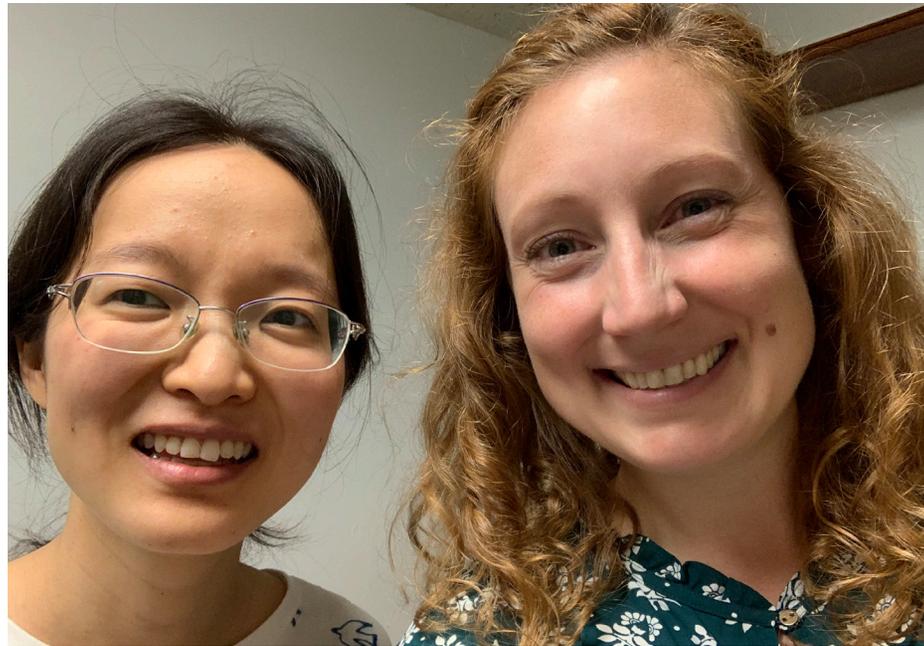
LS: The people around you in CUGS are one of the most important things you'll leave your Ph.D. with because they can be your cheerleaders, support system, collaborators, editors, commiserators, and, ultimately, best friends now and into the future.

KS: Don't stay inside your predetermined boundaries! Take it from a legal geographer—boundaries are merely a socio-political construction. ;) Don't be afraid to stretch yourself and try a new subject area, or take a random class, or even be criticized. Your work will benefit from challenging yourself to try new things.

M: What's next, and what are you most looking forward to post-graduation?

WC: I am currently an Assistant Professor of Environmental Science at Longwood University in the sleepy, rural town of Farmville, VA. I'm thrilled to move back to the rural South and to have an opportunity to share the knowledge that I have gained at Clark with students at Longwood. I am heavily engaged with curriculum development at Longwood, and it is a privilege to apply my training and experiences from Clark to the development of degree programs and coursework that have the potential to influence students' worldviews and aspirations. I feel very lucky to be in this position and couldn't be happier. I enjoy occupying the periphery and operating at the margins of academia, and I have found a great place to do so at Longwood. I am excited about the research projects I am developing in the Mid-Atlantic, Appalachia, and the U.S. South, and I invite any and all members of the Clark community to come for a visit any time you'd like to see what's happening in Farmville.

LS: I'm still in Worcester, as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Holy Cross in Environmental Studies, but I'm planning to move to the UK in May 2020, so I'm looking forward to avoiding more New England winters at some point. I'm also looking forward to AAG and a recent graduates reunion! Work-wise, I'm hoping to advance on an inter-disciplinary collaboration on illicit economies on the one hand, and on the role of near-earth observation technologies in community-led forest governance on the other. So, what's next is in some ways



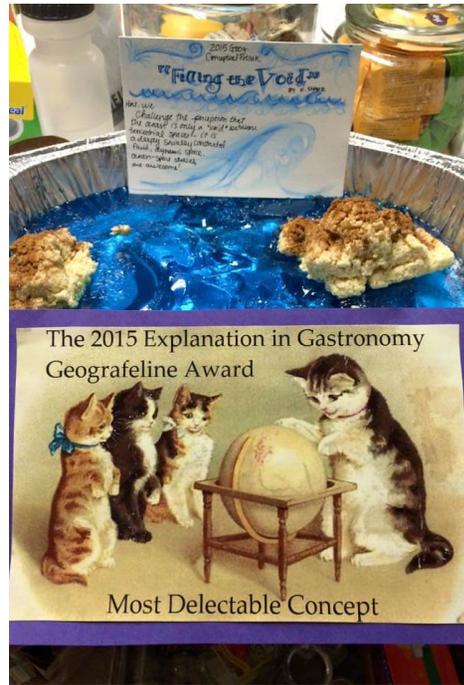
Above: Laura (right) and Yifan Cai on their last day as officemates after five years (photo courtesy of Laura Sauls)

more of the same, but without that looming, monumental deadline (it's just been replaced by a bunch of smaller ones!).

KS: Currently, I am a Natural Resource Manager for the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. I oversee the Mining Section's Mineral Property Management group, which maintains all mining records for the State of Alaska. I love working in the resources sector, and I'm eager to keep learning as much as I can to prepare myself to hopefully keep working in the policy sector here in Alaska.

~M

Right: Kristen's winning entry at the 2015 Conceptual Potluck (photo courtesy of Kristen Shake)



Snapshots from the Year



Above: Jessica Craig and Amy Dundon examine a large book of historic maps

Right: Nick Geron poses with a large mushroom-foraging find in University Park in Worcester, MA (photos courtesy of CUGS)



Above: Kristen, Elisa Arond, and a friend cross-country skiing (photo courtesy of Kristen Shake)

Snapshots from the Year



This page: some of the then-Third, now-Fourth Years at Clark and around Worcester (photos courtesy of current Fourth Years)



Above and below: A couple of Clark's favorite more-than-human geographers (and Nick) (photos courtesy of Laura Sauls)



Snapshots from the Year



Above: Members of the GSG community, friends, and families pose for a group photo at Field Camp at Camp Massapoag in Dunstable, MA in August 2018 (photo courtesy of Mike Athay)

Below: Scott Odell (right) presents on his dissertation work at AAG (photo courtesy of Scott)



Above: Dan Santos presenting at the Clark Graduate Multidisciplinary Conference

Below: Roopa Krithivasan, Sarah SanGiovanni, and Brittany Wheeler meet in TA Alley (photos courtesy of Laura Sauls)



Snapshots from the Year: The 7th Annual Explanation in Gastronomy Event (a.k.a., the "Conceptual Potluck")



This page: Mike Athay (above, right) and Sarah Lerman-Sinkoff (below, third from left) attempt to explain their dishes to a skeptical (and hungry) crowd of their peers, family, and faculty (photos courtesy of Laura Sauls [above] and Mike Athay [below])



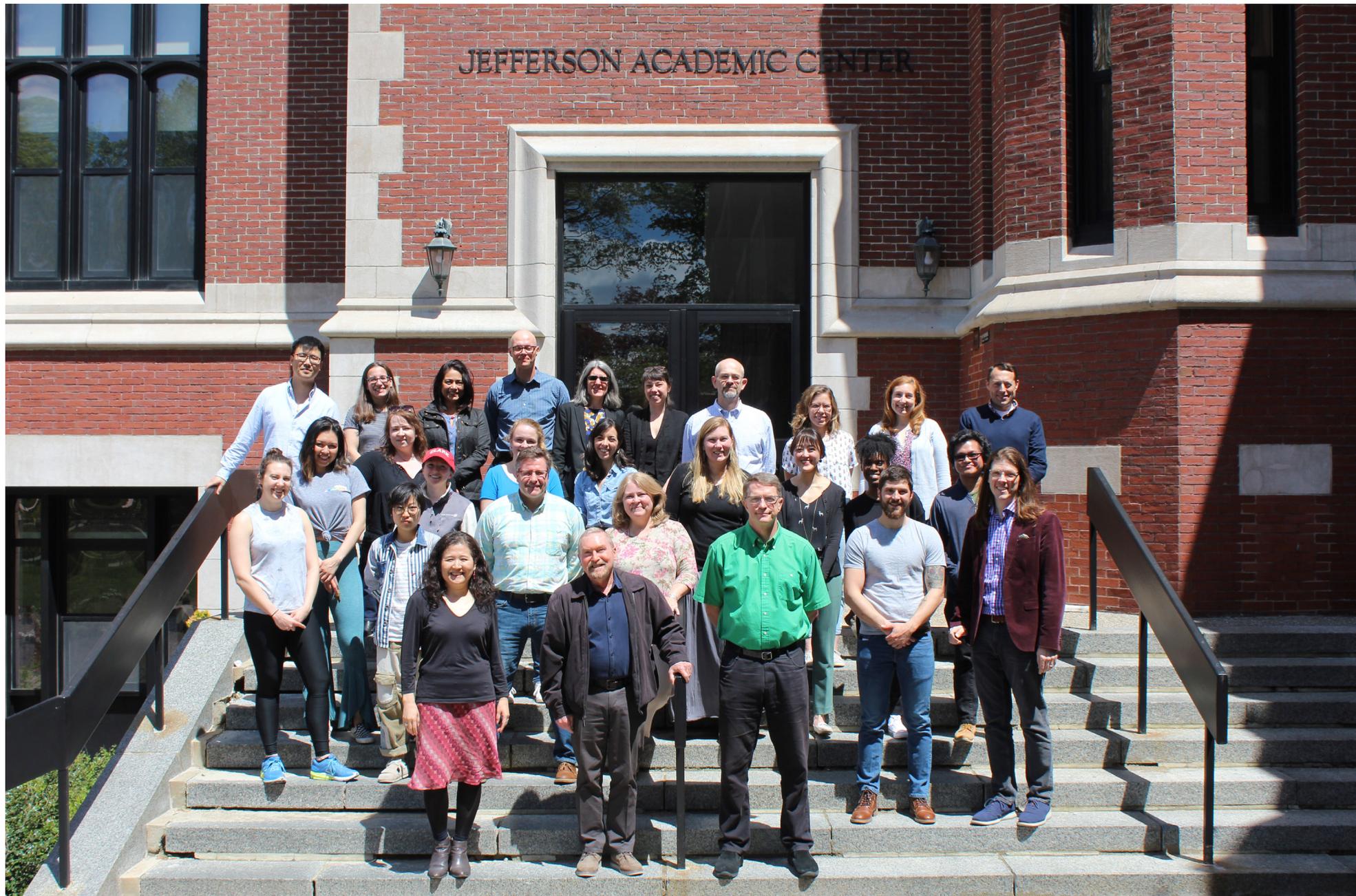
Above: Clare Gaffey and Mwangi Chege (above) sample a few of their colleagues' offerings
Below: CUGS members and their friends and family gather around a fire behind Casa CUGS (photos courtesy of Mike Athay)





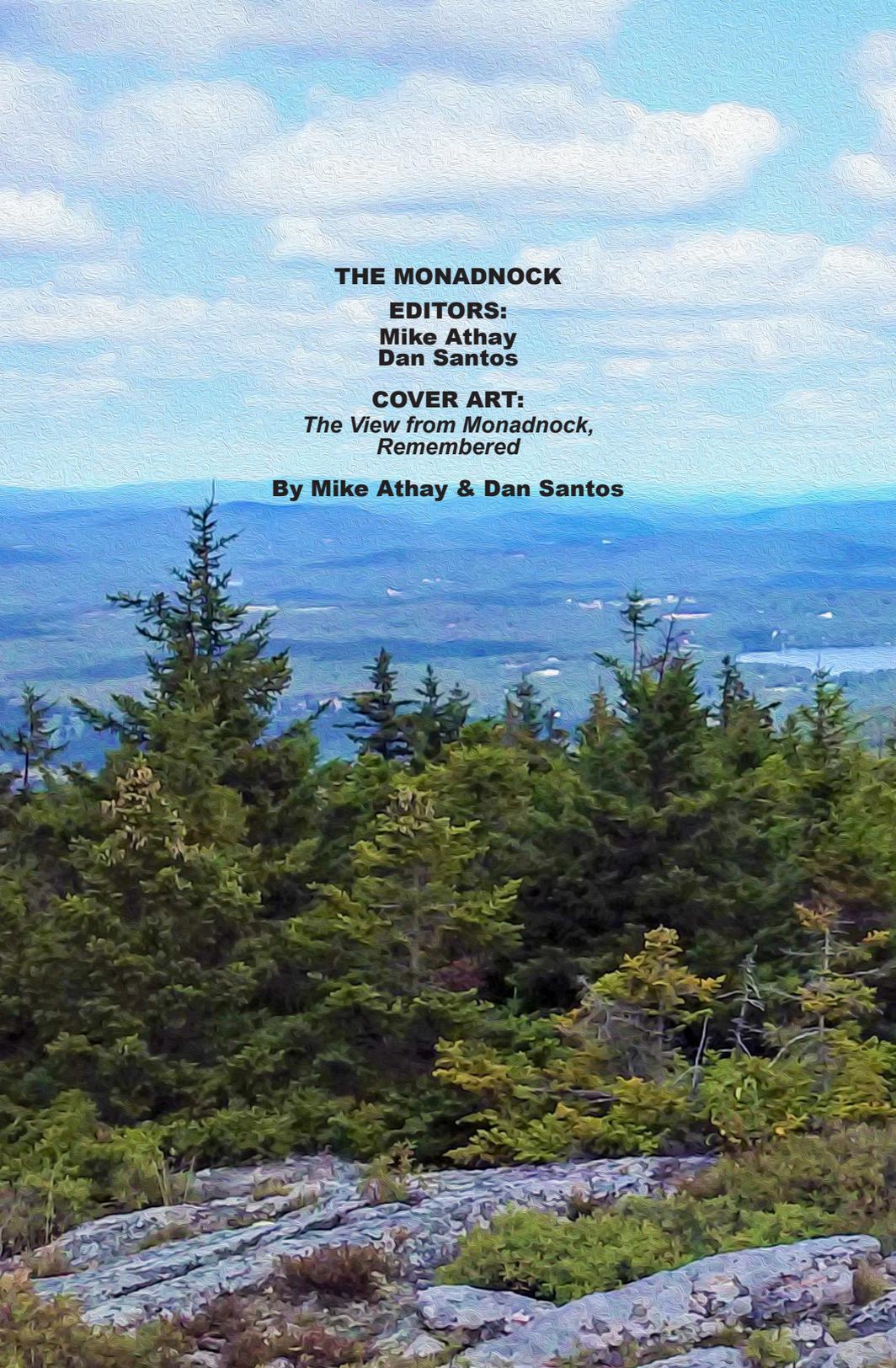
Back Row (L-R): Mark Davidson, Anthony Bebbington, Laura Sauls
Fourth Row (L-R): Su Ye, Lyndon Estes, Florencia Sangermano, Rinku Roy Chowdhury, Jessa Loomis, Yifan Cai, Sam Khallaghi
Third Row (L-R): Rachel Levitt, Luisa Young, Karen Frey, Youjin Chung, James McCarthy

Second Row (L-R): Clare Gaffey, Lei Song, Ashley York, Chris Creelman, Mara van den Bold, Jim Murphy, Mario Machado, Dan Santos
Front Row (L-R): Yuko Aoyama, Ron Eastman, Gil Pontius, Mike Athay
(photo credit: Mike Athay)



Back Row (L-R): Su Ye, Florencia Sangermano, Rinku Roy Chowdhury, Dominik Kulakowski, Deborah Martin, Jessa Loomis, James McCarthy, Mara van den Bold, Laura Sauls, Lyndon Estes
Third Row (L-R): Luisa Young, Rachel Levitt, Clare Gaffey, Jackie Guz, Sarah SanGiovanni, Karen Frey, Youjin Chung, Asha Best, Dan Santos

Second Row (L-R): Ashley York, Lei Song, Jim Murphy, Chris Creelman
Front Row (L-R): Yuko Aoyama, Ron Eastman, Gil Pontius, Mario Machado, Mike Athay
(photo credit: Mike Athay)



THE MONADNOCK

EDITORS:
Mike Athay
Dan Santos

COVER ART:
*The View from Monadnock,
Remembered*

By Mike Athay & Dan Santos