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Recent Conferences

RSS & IRSA – A Tale of Two Conferences

In a collaborative effort, the Annual Conference for the Rural Sociological Society (RSS) and the International Rural Sociology Association’s (IRSA) World Congress were held back-to-back in Toronto, Ontario in August of 2016. RPLC members participated in both conferences and were active in conference presentations. Below are a couple highlights.

RSS 79th Annual Meeting – August 7-10

By Michael Blatherwick, RPLC Liaison Officer

Most of the RSS memberships are from American post-secondary institutions – so the opportunity to connect with an expansive sociology network on Canadian soil was a unique opportunity. This included meeting with delegates from RPLC institutions – University of Missouri and Oregon State, but also included large representations from Penn State, Ohio State, Cornell and many others. From Canada, RPLC Liaison Officer, Michael Blatherwick from Brandon University attended, as well as delegates from the Universities of Regina, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Guelph, Ryerson and more.

The theme of the RSS conference was, “Understanding Rural Social Class in an Era of Global Challenge.” Most sessions attempted to link recent research to the conference theme including key-note presentations from David B. Grunsky, Stanford University, and Erik Olin Wright, University of Wisconsin. Two notable highlights from the RSS conference included:

- o 90 minute presentation on how RSS addresses social class.
 - This session included a lightning-style, 3 minute introduction to RSS’ Research Interest Groups (RIG’s).
 - Each RIG focuses on a social issue and can be seen as a sub-committee of the overall RSS organization.
 - Topics included; Rural Poverty, Sociology of Agriculture and Food (SAFRIG), Population, Rural Gender Issues, Community Health and Family, Natural Resources, Rural Studies, Senior Rural Sociologists, Teaching and Curriculum, Rural Racial Ethnic Minorities, Youth Education and Rural Vitality, International Development, and Rural Policy.
- o Speed-Networking Event for Graduate Students
 - Held at the start of the conference, the outcome of the session allowed for new and returning delegates to have quick, detailed discussion with the majority of people who attended.
 - Each participant was able to highlight and learn from others on each other’s current research.
 - Learning where participants were from also helped in networking with other delegates from the same institutions during the rest of the conference.

Both of the highlights mentioned above allowed for a quick and effective dissemination of information and allowed the participants to come away with knowledge of who is doing research in certain areas. This is something that would be beneficial to future conferences. Many times the size and session heavy agenda doesn’t allow for full exposure to variety of research and network of individuals. The lightning-style presentation and network session at the start of the conference set the stage for a well-organized and beneficial conference to take place.

IRSA Wold Congress – August 10-14*By Josh Barrett, Graduate Student – Memorial University*

From August 10 to 14, I had the opportunity to attend the International Rural Sociology Association's conference, which took place at Ryerson University in Toronto, Ontario. The conference consisted of leading scholars, students, and practitioners across the world presenting new and upcoming research related to rural studies.

During the past year, Drs. Bill Reimer, Kelly Vodden, and I have been working on a manuscript related to rural-urban interdependencies and interactions in a Canadian context. It represents the first in-depth analysis of these relationships in Canada. Given the conference's theme, "Sustainable and Just Rural Transitions: Connections and Complexities", we felt our paper would be an appropriate fit.

I had the wonderful experience of sitting on a plenary panel to discuss, "Rural-Urban Nexus: Challenges and Opportunities," which looked at issues and interactions across Canada.

Chaired by Dr. Reimer, panelists used a specific conceptual framework to direct their presentations and their research discussion. Panelists included John Devlin, University of Guelph, Lars Hallstrom, University of Alberta, Chris Southcott, Lakehead University, Bill Reimer, Brandon and Concordia Universities and myself, Josh Barrett from Memorial University. It was thought provoking to learn how the conceptual framework used in our manuscript was made applicable in other research settings. It nicely tied all of our research together, which helped position our discussion with others thereafter. The session was recorded by Michael Blatherwick from Brandon University and will be made available for view on the RPLC YouTube Channel.

As with all international conferences, delegates attended from across the world, which allowed the panel to compare and contrast what occurs in Canada with other respective areas. This included perspectives from Belgium, the United Kingdom, Germany, and other European jurisdictions on the rural-urban interdependencies occurring within their regions. While each place has their own set of unique challenges and opportunities, there are similar themes throughout many regions, including the exchange of goods, services, and knowledge; public and private institutions; environmental and ecological issues; and attachments to place.

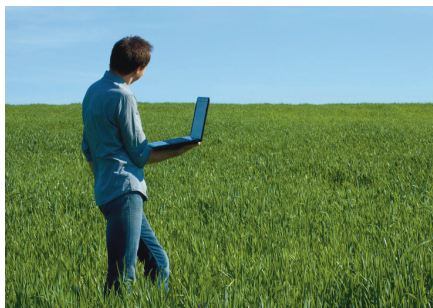
Given the chance, I would most certainly attend the conference again, and would encourage anyone from the RPLC community to do so. It provides an excellent networking opportunity with a key set of leaders in the rural studies field – the exact network the RPLC is currently engaging. Thank you to the RPLC, Dr. Reimer, and my fellow panelists for allowing me to discuss our manuscript and spread rural research in our community.

Canadian Association of Food Studies Conference 2016.

Notes from the Field and Attendance by Team Lead, Kathleen Kevany: When more than 400 people gather in one place, you know there is something of note going on. This year was the annual joint meeting of the Association for the Study of Food and Society, the Agriculture, Food, and Human Values Society, and the Canadian Association for Food Studies. Many great papers were given and many leading edge topics addressed. But how well are we advancing our work in areas of greatest need? Is it sexy or side-stepped to talk about food – both our personal food choices as well as our uncomfortable alliance with our notoriously industrialized food system? How bad do things need to be before we recognize adjustments need to be made for the health of the environment that directly influences our

urban and rural quality of life? Canadian health budget costs are expected to escalate as Canadians experience a growing burden of largely preventable diseases such as, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, stroke, and cancers. Health is more than just a personal issue; it is a societal concern. Achieving optimal health necessitates a consideration of factors like social determinants of health, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. Research, action, and outreach are required to improve nutrition and prevent illness and to protect communities most likely to experience adverse environmental effects; our rural and coastal areas. Systems changes and policy shifts, along with experiential learning and coaching supports, are required to cultivate the skills, knowledge, attitudes, and habits of healthy food consciousness and consumption.

Upcoming Conferences



R2R: Rural Talks to Rural Sept. 28-30th in Blyth, Ontario. The Canadian Centre for Rural Creativity, partnered with the County of Huron, invite you to join with creative thinkers and community builders for three days of dialogue, workshops, and exploration. Share ideas, establish new partnerships, network, inform policy, and create innovative strategies for rural health and well-being through R2R. The symposium will have uplinks for interactive dialogue throughout and be recorded by professional documentary filmmakers for viewing and posterity following the conference.

Find more information at the conference website:

<http://www.ruralcreativity.org/r2r-conference/>



CRRF/RPLC Conference

October 12-15th in Guelph, Ontario.

The conference theme for this year is "Building Vibrant Rural Futures: Mobilizing Knowledge and Informing Policy" and will serve as a critical platform to explore a number of subthemes including: Local and regional economic development, Labour force development and training, Climate change and the impacts on rural communities infrastructure, economies, and lifestyles, Rural data, information, and harnessing digital data & Aboriginal transformations/issues.

Visit the website for more information:

www.guelph2016.crrf.ca

CRRF/RPLC Conference Keynote Speakers



Dr. Erlend Moster Knudsen is a climate researcher and science communicator, working as a deputy director for Pole to Paris. He will explain what made the climate awareness campaign, Pole to Paris (poletoparis.com), unique in how climate information was made more accessible to nonacademic members of society by scientists. The initiative serves as an example of how researchers are mobilizing knowledge to inform policy and build vibrant rural futures. The talk will also include a discussion of the role scientists have in association with politics, media, and opposing industries.



Andrée Cazabon is an award-winning documentary filmmaker, who completed her fifth film *Third World Canada*, on the impact of living conditions for children and families on First Nations reserve, in 2010. The release of the multi-media educational campaign, '4 Seasons of Reconciliation' is launching in 2016 in schools and organizations across Canada.

Join us for the RPLC Half-Day event, scheduled for October 15th! More details to come.

Information on conference field trips, available to participants on Wednesday, October 12th, can be found here:

<http://guelph2016.crrf.ca/field-trips/>

Registration for the conference is Now Open: <http://guelph2016.crrf.ca/registration/>

Meet Your Team Leads: Part 1



Meet Kathleen Kevany who is the Governance Team Lead for RPLC. She is working in the area of individual and community well-being and is particularly focused on strategies, policies and practices - to improve human and planetary well-being by replacing contributing factors to preventable diseases and climate change and GHG emissions. Kathleen is a social psychologist and is an Associate Professor at Dalhousie's Faculty of Agriculture.



Meet Philomena de Lima who is a Sociologist and the Director of the Centre for Remote and Rural Studies at University of the Highlands and Islands, Inverness College, Scotland. Her particular research interests include exploring the intersecting relationships between 'communities of place' (remote and rural places in particular) and 'communities of interests'. She applies her interests to topics such as, migration, ethnicity and race, poverty, disadvantage and social exclusion, social welfare and environment. She is the Team Lead for the RPLC Migration in Remote Rural Areas (MIRRA) group. She has also been an ICRPS faculty member since 2004, and supervises PhD students on a range of topics.

Upcoming Webinar – State of Rural Canada



This webinar will highlight key findings from the State of Rural Canada report. You can have a look at the report here: <http://sorc.crrf.ca/> The webinar will include a coast-to-coast overview from chapter authors and stimulate a lively debate about what is the future of rural Canada. We also hope to profile what communities and governments can do to support rural Canada and rural Canadians.

Webinar panel speakers will include:

Sean Markey, Ryan Gibson, Heather Hall, Al Lauzon, Laurie Guimond, Robert Greenwood, Chris Southcott - and be moderated by Laura Ryser.

To attend, please contact blatherwickm@brandonu.ca.

Unable to attend? Not to worry!

This webinar will be available on YouTube shortly after the broadcast date.

For previous webinars, please visit our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC24ZwmEVj0-vlwNwf9er0hQ>

Rural Routes Podcast



After a brief summer hiatus, the podcast is back on air! Episode 10 features a conversation with Newfoundland writer, Micheal Crummey. He has written extensively about rural and rural cultural experiences, particularly in Newfoundland. His recent novel *Sweetland* stands out as one of the few Canadian novels about a contemporary rural that is very much recognizable as such. In this episode, Michael Crummy reflects on growing up in rural mining towns and why writing honestly about contemporary rural goes against human nature.

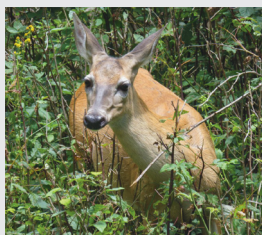
Upcoming Podcast: The upcoming episode discusses the interest generated by farming-style games, such as FarmVille. We'll hear from researcher Alenda Chang on the reasons why, as well as get a gamer's perspective on why so many people are drawn to these types of games.

Check out all available podcast episodes here: www.ruralroutespodcasts.com

Shows are available for streaming or download through iTunes, Google Play, SoundCloud, and Stitcher



Travel Blog



Check out our Secretariat Member and Publications Team Support, Marco Pagani's new Blog entitled, Mark's Travel Blog: *Seeking Nature and the Rural Side of Things*. You've been taking great pictures and sharing wonderful insights from your travels. Looking forward to your entries as they are released!

<https://markpaganittravel.wordpress.com>

Do you write a rural related blog? Let us know and we'd be happy to share it!

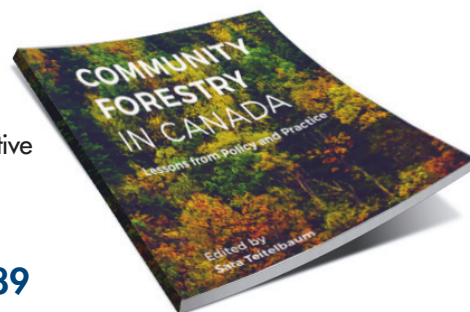
Book Release

Help us celebrate one of our participants, Sara Teitelbaum, who recently released a book - **Community Forestry in Canada: Lessons from Policy and Practice**.

This book brings together the work of over twenty-five researchers to provide the first comparative and empirically rich portrait of community forestry policy, and practice in Canada.

You can find more about the book through UBC Press:

http://www.ubcpres.ca/search/title_book.asp?BookID=299175189





Newsletter Submissions

Do you have a story to share regarding a recent conference you attended, project you completed, workshop you hosted, online blog or video you've posted, or an ongoing research update?

Consider making a submission to the RPLC Newsletter. We are always looking for current content and have made submissions easy. You can find our nifty guide on the website: <http://rplc-capr.ca/rplc-newsletter-submissions/>

Email your Newsletter questions, comments & submissions to **Mesha Richard** at richardm@brandonu.ca or **Michael Blatherwick** at blatherwickm@brandonu.ca

About the RPLC

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RPLC Theme Teams and Knowledge Mobilization Teams

Governance	Personnel Exchanges
Migration	Institutes
Infrastructure & Services	Policy Fora
Natural Resources	Distance Learning
Transformations in Indigenous Communities	Publications
Digital Information Hub	Social Media

Deliverables

Policy Briefs	Conferences
Learning Institutes	Presentations
Publications	Workshops/Webinars
Opportunities	Newsletter
Job Notices	Research Reports

Audience

Faculty	Community Groups
Students	General Public
Government	& YOU
Policy makers	