

**PRAIRIE PERSPECTIVES:  
GEOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS**

Edited by  
Rhonda Koster

Department of Geography  
The University of Saskatchewan  
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
Canada

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## John G. McConnell (1935-1999)



*John McConnell is reading the terms of reference for the John McConnell bursary. The two students with John, Lennie Holowaychuk and Kristi Fedec, were instrumental in organizing his bursary. This social gathering took place on December 6<sup>th</sup> 1998 at Diane and Lawrence Martz's home in Saskatoon.*

Professor John G. McConnell was born in Toronto in 1935. In 1964, John received his Master's degree in Geography from the University of Toronto. He joined the recently founded Department of Geography of the University of Saskatchewan in the same year. For over 34 years, John was an active and valued member of the University of Saskatchewan. Within a short time, John not only accepted the Prairie environment, he embraced it. He became knowledgeable about the wildlife of the province and enjoyed leading hunting and fishing expeditions to all parts of the province.

John was a strong supporter of the Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers. By serving on our executive, he also helped shape our regional organization. Members of the PCAG will recall his thoughtful and constructive comments at our annual meetings. John was an outstanding teacher and, in 1999, he was awarded the prestigious Master Teacher Award for the University of Saskatchewan. John touched many students and colleagues and is fondly remembered by them. Largely through John's efforts, the Geography Department became the home for the Land Use and Environmental Studies interdisciplinary program. John died quietly on September 5, 1999 after a long battle with cancer. Some 500 people paid their final respects to John McConnell at his Memorial Service held on September 12. While John knew of his illness shortly after attending the 1997 CAG meeting in St. John's, he continued to teach and play a role in departmental affairs. For example, John and his wife Gail, attended the 1998 PCAG meeting in Watrous. In the same year, the members of the Environmental Studies Student Association honoured John by establishing a bursary in his name. Friends who wish to remember John are asked to make a donation to the John McConnell Bursary at the University of Saskatchewan.

R. Bone,  
University of Saskatchewan

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## Introduction

The University of Saskatchewan hosted the 1998 Annual Meetings of the Prairie Association of Geographers in Manitou Springs. This second edition of the *Prairie Perspectives* is reflective of the diversity of papers presented at the meetings and the range of research interests found within the discipline of geography.

The lead paper of this volume provides a macro level investigation of the changing nature of core-periphery migration patterns in Canada. Akwawua's findings suggest that although the phenomenon of core periphery migration has occurred at a provincial level, a redefinition of this phenomenon is required at a national level. The paper by Smith, McGregor and Lehr continues the study of migration patterns within Canada at a micro scale, with an analysis of Ukrainian migration and settlement in southwestern Manitoba. The purpose of their investigation is to analyze the utility of GIS in historical geographic investigations.

Three papers out of Brandon follow which examine various aspects related to agriculture. Street and Wiseman explore the usefulness of GIS in aiding agriculturalists, particularly examining the issues related to the adoption of these technologies. McGinn and Bryant provide an analysis of drought periods experienced in the Palliser Triangle region of South-western Manitoba. The drought periods were determined using Palmer's Drought Severity Index and Thornthwaite's Climatological Water Balance. Their examination determined that the recollection of drought by agriculturalists is closely related to the actual severity of drought events. Everitt and Gill's paper provides an historical account of the development and evolution of grain terminals in Canada, beginning with the Lakehead development and culminating in the expansion to the west coast terminals. Although not directly concerned with agricultural issues, the final paper within a rural context is provided by Ofosuehene's comparative analysis of rural

community development strategies between Saskatchewan and North Dakota.

Two examinations of lake environments were conducted by Greengrass *et.al* and by Parsons and McGinn. The first provides an in depth analysis of Waldsea Lake, one of the most studied saline lakes in Western Canada. Their analysis utilizes new techniques to determine the chemical and hydrological fluctuations within the lake, and what drives these changes over time. Parsons and McGinn examine the fluctuation of water levels in Riding Mountain National Park, determining that a cyclic pattern of water fluctuation does exist. Their research accounts for several variables contributing to this pattern.

Two studies were conducted dealing with public perception. The first of these by Haque *et.al*, examines the conflict resolution process surrounding water infrastructure development in three different case study locations. Morton, Haque and Wiseman's paper concerns the role of public perception of risk associated with a chemical industry in Brandon. Both studies emphasize the need for open communication and education.

Three tourism related papers follow the previous discussion. The first is Everitt and Welsted's examination of incipient mass tourism in the Lake Chapala Region of Mexico. Both Fedec and Archibold and Repko and Everitt's papers provide an analysis of river corridor use for recreational purposes within the cities of Saskatoon and Brandon respectively.

This year's publication is nicely rounded out by Sylvestre's theoretical examination of the role of geography in gerontological studies. She argues that gerontological geographers must return to the roots of Vidal and his conceptualization of the interconnectedness between society and the environment.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to Weldon Hiebert for all his help and hard work, and to John Selwood and John Lehr for all their assistance and for providing us with the initial Prairie Perspectives format.

Rhonda Koster  
Saskatoon, 1999

