

**PRAIRIE PERSPECTIVES:
GEOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS**

Edited by
Douglas C. Munski

Department of Geography
University of North Dakota
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Department of Geography

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Preface

The 30th annual meeting of the Prairie Division of the Canadian Association of Geographers was held September 29, 2006 to October 1, 2006 in Rugby, North Dakota. Hosted by the University of North Dakota's Department of Geography, the conference attracted delegates representing a wide spectrum of teaching, research, and service interests in geographical techniques, physical, regional, and human geography. Eighteen papers and eight posters were presented by more than 45 authors from Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North Dakota, Ontario, British Columbia, and Minnesota. Among the attendees was the 2006 keynote speaker Dr. Gary Johnson, Assistant Vice-President for Research and Co-Project Director, ND EPSCoR, University of North Dakota. Consistent with past regional meetings, member departments were well represented by a diverse mix of undergraduates, graduate students, staff members, and faculty members presenting their research.

The 2006 PCAG Fieldtrip was organized by the Department of Geography of the University of North Dakota under the leadership of Dr. Gregory S. Vandenberg and Dr. Paul Todhunter. This field trip, "Investigating the Prairie Pothole Region of North Central North Dakota" began and ended at the Rugby EconoLodge, the conference facility. The geographers toured selected portions of Pierce County and Benson County in what is overwhelmingly a landscape of cash grain agriculture focused upon wheat with some livestock operations that are overlain upon glacial drift deposits and marked by numerous wetlands. Communities along the former Great Northern Railway were highlighted with "windshield vistas", including Knox, York, and Leeds. However, special stops were made at Churchs Ferry and Minnewaukan, both communities feeling the adverse affects of the flooding caused by Devils Lake's expansion. A "windshield vista" also was made of Harlow, a Soo Line Railroad community that is typical among the hamlets and villages in the Prairie Pothole region of North Central North Dakota struggling to survive. As the final stop, the tour group visited the Dakota Hills Winery. This is a 25-acre estate vineyard near Knox that utilizes wild grapes, plums, June berries, Saskatoon berries, raspberries, cherries, and niche-market (Norwegian) Josta berries to produce wines as an alternative form of agricultural production. As a special touch, people who came to the annual banquet were treated to products from the Dakota Hills Winery.

Of the 26 conference presentations, four papers and the fieldtrip guide are included in this year's volume of *Prairie Perspectives* - plus nine additional papers that, due to an unfortunate funding problem, would have appeared in the second issue of last year's volume that had to be cancelled. All papers submitted to *Prairie Perspectives* are subject to a double-blind peer review process. For each paper we were able to solicit reviews from leading researchers at universities across Canada. We are pleased to present a collection of papers that demonstrate research of high quality.

The first two papers focus on Canada's Indigenous people. Hamilton addresses the land settlement of the Metis at Willow Bunch, Saskatchewan, 1840-1910 whereas Wouters and Peters examine urban aboriginal settlement patterns and housing characteristics as distributed in major prairie cities in 2001. Next comes a single entry on social geography that is the work of Lovett and Beesley on residential preferences of Canada's creative class. Then, another group of papers is seen with Koster's article on community-based tourism and Everitt's case study of tourism in the British Virgin Islands. Sustainable development is the focus of the sixth paper in this volume with the emphasis of study by Haque, Deb, and Medeiros being the Cananea Oyster Producers Cooperative in Brazil. A set of papers then follows which highlights geographic techniques as applied to environmental problems. Henderson and Piwowar consider the effectiveness of remote sensing for studying boreal forest response to moisture stress with Luo and Piwowar then examining the use of GIS for assessing wildfire risks to climate change in Saskatchewan. A geomorphology study follows and introduces a new theme in this volume. Zaniewski, McGinn, and Wiseman present findings on the extent and characteristics of glaciolacustrine and other deposits in Riding Mountain's Otter Lake Basin. Practical applications of geographic inquiry is the thrust of the tenth paper in this volume with the work of Paton, Champagne, and McGinn regarding wastewater reclamation and re-use in Riding Mountain's Clear Lake Watershed. Next comes a paper in historical geography by Selwood and Brayshay about studying the Hudson's Bay Company in terms of how this corporation was thinking globally and acting locally in its governor's 1934 tour of the company's operations in the eastern Arctic. The final group of papers reflects the work of human geographers in literary geography. Cecil and Cecil consider memory and place-based identity of the elderly in two of Margaret Atwood's texts while Zubrycki examines the notion of literary utopias being literal hells.

As conference organizer, I would like to thank all conference participants and the countless number of individuals who helped organize the 2006 meeting of the PCAG at Rugby, North Dakota. As guest editor for

this volume of *Prairie Perspectives*, I also would like to thank the authors for their contribution to this journal, and the manuscript reviewers for their valuable service to the PCAG. Finally, I especially am grateful to Weldon Hiebert, University of Winnipeg, who once again managed the layout and production of the journal.

Finally I would like to express my gratitude to the Association of North Dakota Geographers for their support in the production of these proceedings.

Douglas C. Munki
Department of Geography
University of North Dakota

