

# SWG news

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## ED Report

In June, the board formed an Ad Hoc Membership Committee to look at SWG's membership structure and explore potential new categories. Consisting of board members Maria Pia Casarini, Carmen Masó, Sarah Oktay and Mollie Webb, the committee met several times over the summer and fall. Thus far, it has recommended to the board the following ideas: SWG will continue to retain its existing membership structure — members and students — but will add new categories including K-12 educators, friends of SWG, and organizations/supporters. These new types of members will not be able to hold office or necessarily serve on committees, but we wish them the opportunity to support the fine work of our members, engage in meetings and conferences and promote SWG. Currently, the committee is meeting to discuss benefits as well as the dues each category may pay. We hope to roll out the new membership structure in 2020. If you have any comments/suggestions/advice about our new direction, please contact me at [mvanbalgooy@iswg.org](mailto:mvanbalgooy@iswg.org) or 202.546.9228.



Mary van Balgooy

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## President's Corner

### The Society of Woman Geographers



Susan Leonard

We were founded in 1925 to highlight the scientific and explorative works of women in a time when most women were discounted as having few brains. We belonged "barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen." Since then, we pride ourselves as a people and a nation for having come a long way. Organizations such as the Explorers Club have become co-ed. Harvard, Yale, Princeton and other institutes of higher learning have opened their doors to women. Women head some of the major corporations. We represent over half of the population.

So why are we still all women? The Society of Woman Geographers?

The events of this year point out that it is still a male-dominant world. Especially in the U.S., one of the few major countries never to have a female leader. And especially in a white male-dominant world. The Nobel prize for physics was recently awarded to Dr. Donna Strickland, only the third time a woman has ever received this prize. Marie Curie was the first. Dr. Maria Goeppert-Mayer was the second, 55 years ago. And according to the BBC, a physicist at Cern was just suspended for stating "that physics had been 'built by men' and that male scientists were being discriminated against."

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## President's Corner, continued from page 1

SWG is an international organization of women who know no boundaries. We have entered male-dominated realms and proven our mettle. We have always been in these realms, but our contributions were rarely acknowledged. Even today, in boardrooms, when an idea is put forth by a woman, it is often ridiculed or ignored. Moments later when put forth by a man, it is greeted with acclaim. One of our Gold Medal winners, Constanza Ceruti, has said that male scientists have tried to claim her findings of the Incan mummies as their own.

How do we change these attitudes? How do we receive the recognition we deserve for the work that we do? Persistence, of course. It is one of our best qualities. In the 41 years that I have been diving, I have seen the dive boats change from almost all male to almost all female participants. The voices of women are being heard, if not always heeded. Times are slowly changing.



Members of the board in Washington, D.C. From left to right: Susan, Carmen, Verna, Executive Director Mary, Trudy, Holly, Jennifer, Mollie, Sarah and Karen.

The Society of Woman Geographers is needed to persist in recognizing ourselves. If we don't value us and speak out, why should anyone else? Our contributions are strong. Wear your SWG pin with pride.

On a positive note, the board of SWG just spent a weekend together in Washington. We felt it necessary to meet face to face and really get to know one another. What a rewarding experience. It is one that I have also felt every time I have attended a Triennial. Not only are the presentations

informative, thought-provoking and inspirational, the richness of contact with such a bright, creative, well-informed group of women is worth far more than the price of the weekend. I know it is early, but please plan to attend the Triennial in Washington, D.C., in 2020. Try to get to any of the group meetings and meet local members. And listen in to one of the webinars we are broadcasting.

The Society of Woman Geographers is a vital, vibrant group of women. Get to know them and enrich your lives.

## ED Report, continued from page 1

I also want to invite you to an event on April 2 at the Library of Congress. The Society in partnership with the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress will hold a one-day conference to discuss the contributions women

have made to the field of geography and, more important, to inspire participants to strengthen the role of women in geography today. The conference is free and will take place before the American Association of Geographers annual meeting in D.C. Please look for updated information on our website, email blasts and printed materials. I hope to see many of our members there!

## The Society of Woman Geographers

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### SWG NEWS

Please send your news, publications, group activities, and works in progress to SWG Headquarters at:  
[Headquarters@iswg.org](mailto:Headquarters@iswg.org)

**Deadline for the next Newsletter**  
**February 28, 2019**



This summer **Joanruth Baumann** did a trip by herself to Siberia and amazing Lake Baikal — the holder of 20 percent of the world's fresh water! Then she joined friends in the far west of Mongolia, near the Chinese/Kazakh border, to camp at 7,000 feet with Kazakh nomads, their yak, goats, sheep and trained wild eagles. The eagles were captured from the mountains and trained to hunt fox and rabbits — then, at age 10, returned to the wild. Holding one was a treat! The documentary *The Eagle Huntress* was filmed here.

A final delight was to spend a week in the Gobi Desert — trekking (petroglyphs, wild horses, visiting at ger (yurts) encountered), dinner with the female minister of culture, finding a new dinosaur skeleton while exploring the Flaming Gorge, and attending the local Naadam Festival to see wrestling, archery and horse racing. Few westerners were there, except for some National Geographic photographers, but the vibrantly dressed locals were the best part of the experience.



**Laurel Bellante** was hired in fall 2018 as the assistant director of food studies at the Center for Regional Food Studies at the University of Arizona (UA). In her role, Laurel will work across the UA campus and the greater Tucson region to build a new undergraduate degree in food studies and a robust program of food-related engagement and research.

**Frances F. Berdan** spent three weeks in the summer participating in a summer school program in Oxford, England. She took a course titled “From Castles to Country Houses”

that included field trips to Hampton Court and Goodrich, Raglan and Kenilworth castles. Her publications this year included “Was Aztec and Mixtec Turquoise Mined in the American Southwest?” (with four other authors), *Science Advances* v. 4: eaas9370. 13 June 2018, and “Little Phonetic Glyphs in the Florentine Codex” in *The Significance of Small Things: Essays in Honor of Diana Fane* (ed. by Ken Moser and Coco Alcala): 23-31. Madrid: Ediciones El Viso. 2018.



In early September, SWG members **Maria Pia Casarini** and **Helen Harwell Smith** met for the second year in Kirkwall, Orkney, at the Orkney International Science Festival. SWG board member Maria Pia Casarini, an Arctic historian, spoke to a sold-out auditorium about the dramatic life and career

of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton. Remarkable paintings by Paola Folicaldi Suh, featured in the lecture, captured the life, atmosphere and drama of Shackleton’s *Endurance* expedition.

SWG’s Helen Smith spent another summer at Orkney’s premier Neolithic archeological dig, Ness of Brodgar. This summer she began postexcavation analysis of a unique assemblage of artifacts: small fired clay balls. But what were they?

In July, **Nora Chiang** attended the Gendered Geographies of Care and Mentoring Symposium at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. It started with an opening at the Women’s Bookshop with Dr. Robyn Longhurst (Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, University of Waikato) and MP Carmel Sepuloni (Minister for Social Development and Disability Issues). The next day, she participated in a panel session and workshops to develop mentoring skills and create supportive spaces.

Inspired by an article written by leaders of the International Geographical Union Commission on Gender and Geography, Nora is working on her project, “Research and Teaching on Gender and Geography in Taiwan.” She is editing a book on the stories of illustrious careers of her department graduates.

On Oct. 8, **Cynthia Clampitt’s** new food studies book — *Pigs, Pork, and Heartland Hogs: From Wild Boar to Baconfest*

— will be released by Rowman & Littlefield. Domesticated 12,000 years ago, pigs have been a source of abundant and tasty protein for much of human history. Today, pork is the most commonly consumed meat in the world. Like Clampitt's previous book, *Midwest Maize*, this book focuses not only on history but also on culture, geography, biology, and current practices and issues. From Assyrians and Celts to backyard barbecues and cans of Spam, pigs have fed us for a long time. And because today the greatest producer of pork is the American Midwest, the book also includes recipes for some iconic dishes from across this region.

In March 2018, **Imogene Drummond** shared her presentation "Wandering and Walking: Facing the Unknown" with the SWG New York group about her three-month walkabout in Scotland and Spain in 2017.



**Imogene Drummond at her Cosmos Exhibit in Spain.**

In May, Imogene traveled to Los Angeles for the "Circular" art exhibit at the BG Gallery, which included her new piece *Split/Open*. The mixed-media sculpture of two half-spheres deals with interiority and exteriority. It symbolizes our pale blue dot of a home with its fiery core, surrounded by space.

In June-August, Imogene was an artist in residence at Airgentum Hoja de Ruta in Castilblanco, Andalucia, Spain. There, she explored the question "How can my art help people experience that they are part of the universe?" To this end, she created an interactive immersive video installation — a new direction for her — and two short videos. These, as well as new paintings inspired by living there, were exhibited in August in a show entitled "Connecting Castilblanco with the Cosmos." In the installation, people moved through the exhibit space and saw imagery of their local landscape mixed with the cosmos projected onto themselves. To symbolize consciousness, the imagery was also reflected in mirrors. Imogene was thrilled with the audience's enthusiastic response.

Highlights also include swimming with dragonflies and sleeping under the stars every night! For more information, photos and a video of the installation, please see the link on the Airgentum website: [www.airgentum.org/imogene-drummond](http://www.airgentum.org/imogene-drummond).

During September, Imogene was an artist in residence at the Artists in an Olivegarden Residency in Arles, France. There she took country walks in the Camargue and created a new series of paintings inspired by the Provençal light and landscape.

**Alison (DeGraff) Ollivierre** was recognized as one of *xyHt Magazine*'s 40 Under 40 Remarkable Geospatial Professionals for 2018 earlier this year, as a motivated and noteworthy geospatial professional, under 40 years of age, who works tirelessly to promote geospatial fields and provide inspiration for young people considering entering related careers.



**Caroline Torkildson** gave the keynote address, "Reinventing My Life Through GIS," on Oct. 4 at the Minnesota GIS/LIS Consortium.

In late July, **Betty Trummel** worked with colleagues from the nonprofit organization A to Z Literacy Movement ([www.atozliteracy.org](http://www.atozliteracy.org)) and returned to Lusaka, Zambia, to deliver educational materials and literacy lessons, provide professional development to teachers and continue a project she started in July 2016. That project, which centers around community walks and writing, has become an integral part of her teaching in Zambia.

She has spent most of her four visits to Zambia at a school at the crossroads of the compounds of Kilikiliki, Mutendere and Valley View. Shine Zambia Reading Academy searches out the most vulnerable and illiterate children in those compounds and provides a two-year program focused on basic literacy

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# Annie Smith Peck

By SWG member Caroline (Siffy) Torkildson



Summit of El Misti where Annie stood in 1903.

Annie Smith Peck (1850-1935) was one of the first (and oldest at the time) members of SWG. Annie is known as a mountaineer; she was the first person to climb Mount Huascarán (1908) and Mount Coropuna (1911) as well as explore the Raura Mountain range — all in Peru. But she was much more: one of the first female archeologists, a political activist and suffragist.

Over the years I have been visiting places important to Annie, such as the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, Greece (where she studied), the Matterhorn (which she climbed), Providence (where she was born), New York City, Chile, Argentina and finally her favorite and most important place to her, Peru. Now my research is complete, and I can finish the final chapters for my book, *My Home Is Where My Trunk Is: My Travels With Annie S. Peck*. I interweave my own journeys with hers.

My trip started in Lima, as in Peru, “all roads lead to Lima.” I stayed at the Hotel Maury and headed south to the Hotel Bolívar, as Annie stayed at both hotels and recommended them in her books. She met her good friend President Augusto Leguía at the Bolívar on her trip in 1929 promoting tourism traveling by air (she was 79).

I took a bus north to the Huaylas Valley, Ancash, to see “her mountain,” as Blair Niles wrote that Annie called Huascarán. I

stayed at the foot of Mount Huascarán in Mancos at a lodge, La Casita de mi Abuela, with a grand view upward. The guiding family that runs the lodge knew of Annie, and the cook, an older woman, showed me the photograph hanging on the wall of Annie in her Huascarán climbing outfit.

From Mancos, I trekked in Huascarán National Park toward the refugio where mountaineers start out today and the route Annie pioneered in the early 1900s. I visited old Yungay, the place Annie felt most at home, which sadly was destroyed by a landslide caused by an earthquake in 1970 when a chunk of the north summit (Annie’s peak) collapsed and killed almost the entire population of 20,000.

I then took a taxi to the turquoise Llanganuco Lakes at the base of the north peak of Huascarán in Huascarán National Park. Annie had ridden this way on horseback to scope out and attempt the east side of the mountain on her first visit in 1904. Today this route is a road, although it would have been easier to ride a horse than bounce all over on the rugged, twisty gravel road. I passed beneath the Yosemite-like cliffs that Annie wrote about and admired. Annie realized the west side would be easier to climb after her failed first attempt on the east side of the mountain.

From there, I took a local bus to the spine of the Cordillera Negra (over 14,000 feet), following the “road” that Annie

had traveled to and from the coast by horseback (from her steamship in Chimbote).

I took another long bus ride back to Lima to catch a plane south to Arequipa, where the 19,101-foot volcano, El Misti, stands dramatically over the city. I stayed at the former boarding house of the infamous Tia Bates, a local legend, where Annie had stayed on her trip flying around South America, which was (and still is) known for its gardens, now called La Casa de mi Abuela.

Annie had climbed El Misti on her way back from her first attempt on Illampu in Bolivia on her first trip to South America in 1903. My goal was to do the same, especially as I was the same age as Annie when she climbed it. With our guide, Arcadio; a driver; and a cook, we drove the northern remote route to El Misti and trekked to Mont Blanc base camp where Annie had stayed on her climb. Herds of wild vicuna and guanaco roamed the great expanses around the volcano.

Arcadio and I started out at 2 a.m. for the summit and made it to the top



A local on the lower slopes of Mount Huascarán discovers Annie Peck.

many hours later. We took the same route that Annie took, which is rarely used today. Annie had the benefit of riding a donkey much of the route. Today they are banned because too many died from altitude sickness.

As we traveled, I handed out postcards in Spanish with a photo of Annie to

promote her story with locals and scholars alike. This was a great tool and a way to gain access to guarded libraries. I also tried to find articles and information about her. In conclusion, I will be writing up my story in several chapters of my book, which I hope to have out in a year or so.

#### Member News, continued from page 4

and numeracy. She has seen this school grow since her first visit in 2010. One building of four classrooms has blossomed into eight classroom areas in two buildings, and a third block of rooms houses a library, staff room and office. The teaching staff has increased from three to 10 teachers and includes a librarian who takes on teaching duties. After completing the program at Shine Zambia, students have the skills to go on to other schools in the Lusaka area. This is such a valuable center for learning in the heart of the compounds of Lusaka.



By far, the most valuable component of these experiences for Betty has been working with the students and teachers, many of whom she has now known for four to eight years. She and the teachers have developed relationships and have a deeper connection as educators. She has followed the progress of some of the students she first met in 2010 and has been a support to them along the way. Social media and technology have made it possible to keep connections alive each time she leaves Zambia and help to fill in the long gap between her visits.



## Corresponding

On Sept. 19, SWG corresponding members Mechtild Rössler, Connie Burke and Barbara Euser met for dinner in Paris. The far-ranging discussion included an update on the situation at Pavlopetri in Greece (the oldest underwater city in the world). In July 2017, Mechtild was the featured speaker at Pavlopetri Watch Day, organized by the Greek Chapter of ARCH (Alliance for the Restoration of Cultural Heritage). She was invited by the Ministry of Culture and ARCH for this official UNESCO mission. Barbara is president of the Greek chapter; Connie is an active member. SWG member Cheryl Benard is president of the Greek chapter's parent organization, ARCH International, based in Washington, D.C. As a result of steps taken at Pavlopetri Watch Day 2017, the geographical coordinates of the archeological site of Pavlopetri were published in the official Greek government gazette, *F. E. K.*, in February 2018. That publication led the way to a notice to mariners published by the Greek Hydrological Service stating that the underwater archeological site is off limits to anchoring and fishing. In the next few months, the archeological site will be noted on all international marine charts. This is a huge advance for the protection of the endangered cultural heritage site of Pavlopetri.

During a discussion of SWG topics, the corresponding members decided to explore with headquarters the options for creating webinars to add to the growing collection of this important SWG resource. Because of time differences, it was suggested that the webinars could be recorded and written questions submitted when the webinar is aired.

There was a consensus that a corresponding members rendezvous be organized well in advance for 2019 in southern France, Greece or Italy. All SWG members would be invited.

The wine enjoyed at this dinner meeting was named *Les Charmeuses*, describing both the wine and those who consumed it.

## San Francisco Bay Area

The Bay Area Group met on Sept. 8 at Laura Nader's home in Berkeley, the first meeting of the season where each member reported on recent activities and travels. The 20 members plus two guests have been writing books, working for human rights and the environment, making discoveries and exploring. Marcy Adamski has completed her 300 interviews with Tibetan elders and is now analyzing and distilling the information for a book. Google is putting the videotapes on YouTube. Laura Nader's book *Contrarian Anthropology: The Unwritten Rules of Academia* came out in January. She is now working on a book of her letters, 1960-present, covering a vast range from death-row prisoners to presidents. Carolyn Merchant's next book, *Anthropocene and the Humanities*, will be coming out soon. She takes the steam engine as the start of the Anthropocene and explores what it means for history, philosophy and the arts. A symposium held in her honor on the occasion of her retirement from UC Berkeley will result in a book, *After the Death of Nature: Carolyn Merchant and the Future of Human-Nature Relations*. Carolyn is a fellow at the Center for Behavior Sciences at Stanford. Junko Habu is editing a book on East and Southeast Asian archaeology. In the spring, she edited a Japanese book on traditional ecological knowledge, including Fukushima farmer interviews. She will now produce the English version of the Fukushima interviews. Her next research project will be landscape use in Japan from hunter-gatherers to the present, noting the remarkable continuity. Joanna Biggar led a travel writers' workshop in Cuba; the anthology of their pieces will come out in November. She remarked on the huge change made by President Trump's travel restrictions. She spent three weeks in Burgundy during the heat wave and wrote a piece about it on her blog, "Love in the Time of Canicule."

Judith Justice presented papers at various anthropology and international meeting on health policy and on health and development, in addition to papers with a focus on leprosy (Hansen's disease). She has recently become an evaluator of an international leprosy research initiative based in

Amsterdam. She told of a recent victory of restoring funding to US Hansen's disease clinics after the Health and Human Services department attempted to cut funding for 11 of 16 clinics, presumably thinking no one cared or was paying attention. Senators Feinstein and Harris added their voices to the outcry. Arlene Blum has produced a series of 4-minute videos on six classes of toxic chemicals in her crusade to have them banned. She is working in D.C. on the banning of fluorinated stain remover chemicals. Mary Crowley's institute, Project Kaisei, dedicated to cleaning up the oceans, is focusing on tagging ghost nets, derelict fishnets, to have them collected. She was recently in Indonesia and was impressed by its decreasing use of plastics and creative alternatives. Barbara Rose Johnston continues her work on health effects of radiation from nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands. Anne Firth Murray taught three courses at Stanford in the winter quarter, on international women's health and human rights and on love as a force for social justice. She will be teaching at the Handa Center for Human Rights and International Justice at Stanford, giving her courses a greater emphasis on human rights. She gave a talk in Singapore to women at Facebook at an event entitled "Leading with Courage." She spoke about women's empowerment, going beyond the workplace to make a difference in the world, and was well received.

Jeanne Adams would like her land in New Mexico to become a geological reserve and is working with the state to purchase it. She was a delegate to the Global Climate Action Summit in San Francisco in September. Tamia Marg is considering making her eastern California ranch a field station within

the UC Natural Reserve System. Her travels took her to Cambodia, Myanmar and northern Thailand, where she visited Burmese migrant compounds for workers in orange groves. Iris Priestaf, groundwater consultant, is now working on plans to make groundwater sustainable, following California's long-overdue Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Sandy Nichols is nearing completion of her work with *braceros*, Mexican migrant workers, in Napa; last fall she helped organize Bracero Appreciation Day in conjunction with an exhibition highlighting their role in saving Napa's agriculture in WWII and their subsequent contributions, which have helped make Napa a world-class wine region. The UC Berkeley Bancroft Library is interested in creating an archive of her oral histories and information. She continues her current project of retracing the route of Alexander von Humboldt in 1802 in northern Peru and is organizing a conference in Peru about Humboldt. Eileen Lacey, a mammologist, was invited to teach a short course in China, followed by the offer of a 10-day trip to the eastern side of the Tibetan Plateau to look at wildlife and the opportunity to observe interactions between the Chinese and Tibetans. Many other members traveled afar, including Kit Duane contrasting two long walks in Spain, one to a remote Berber area and the other to the popular tourist destination Costa Brava; Betsy White walking in Sicily and Tuscany, particularly enjoying the Via Francigena, a pilgrimage route from Tuscany to Rome; and Libby Ingalls searching for wildflowers and wildlife in beautiful remote areas of Portugal and Croatia.



## Did You Know About SWG's Oral History Program?

In 2012 and 2013 SWG transferred more than 80 interview transcripts to the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress (LOC); original sound recordings of the interviews on audio cassettes and digital audio DVDs were transferred to the Sound Division of the LOC. Locating the interviews at the LOC ensures that the SWG oral history interviews will be widely available to researchers interested in exploration, scientific discovery, the careers of women, and the history of SWG. You can find a listing of the interviewees on our website at [iswg.org/about/oral-histories](http://iswg.org/about/oral-histories).

# New Members



**Rhea Bunker** is a new member of SWG's New York group. She is a photographer, printmaker and book designer whose work has taken her to "edge of the world" locations such as Tierra del Fuego in Argentina, the islands and glaciers of Greenland and the mountains, lochs and rocky coasts of Scotland, including the Outer Hebrides and the Orkney Islands.

Rhea uses a combination of photography, cartography and a passion for geology to create artwork focused on highlighting stories within ancient landscapes and revealing the unseen energy within our changing planet. Experimenting with patterns of movement in the Earth's crust, she shares details of our environment that are often overlooked.

Her work has been displayed in New York City, Buenos Aires, Copenhagen, Edinburgh, Ullapool, Inverness and Greenland. She uses her work to promote both environmental concerns and interests in historic preservation.

Rhea's most recent work has focused on the changing coastline of Greenland. She has shared this work at Greenlandic Hus in Copenhagen, Ilulissat Kunstmuseum, Sisimiut's Taseralik Cultural Center, Nuuk Kunstmuseum and the Uummannaq Museum, all along Greenland's western coast. This fall, she shares her photo study about Greenlandic dog sleds, *Qamutit*, at the Narsaq Museum in southern Greenland.

Her current show, *Melting Ice and Rising Seas: Environments at Risk*, is now on exhibit at the Hitchcock Center for the Environment in Amherst, Mass., where she has just been invited to join the board.

Rhea has a bachelor of fine arts in communication design and a bachelor's degree in art history from the University at Buffalo. Alongside her art, she has worked as an educational book designer for over 40 years. She now truly looks forward to participating in SWG and sharing experiences and ideas with its members.



**Karen S. Barton** completed her undergraduate studies in California and was on the environmental law school track toward UCLA when at the last minute she took an impromptu turn toward Arizona. Through college she had been employed

by a travel company, a position that helped fuel her passion for people and places. After graduating from UC Irvine, she needed a career that would enable her to collect experiences rather than things, so she traveled to Tucson to study environmental and cultural geography.

At the University of Arizona, Karen developed an appreciation for teaching and research, thanks largely to the field knowledge and experience of Drs. Marston, Young and Sell. She was particularly interested in resource conflicts involving environmental groups and indigenous populations and conducted her master's and doctoral field research in Mexico and the U.S. Pacific Northwest.

Karen is now a professor in the Geography and Geographic Information Systems Department at the University of Northern Colorado, where she conducts research on community resilience and resource conflicts in the developing world. This type of work gets her — as well as her students — outside, where she feels most comfortable. She's been fortunate enough to travel with her students from the heights of Machu Picchu to the volcanic lowlands of Iceland, along Guyana's Linden to Lethem Trail en route to the Rupununi savannah and within earthquake-affected areas of Nepal. She is working on a book project entitled *The Geographical Dimensions of Africa's Greatest Shipwreck*, about the *Joola* ferry disaster, which led to the loss of 1,863 lives, more than the RMS *Titanic*. These projects have been supported by both the Fulbright Scholar program and the National Endowment for the Humanities. In her free time Karen enjoys long-distance running, swimming and spending time with her family.



**Martina Angela Caretta** is an assistant professor in geography at the Department of Geology and Geography at West Virginia University. She holds a doctorate in geography from Stockholm University, Sweden. She is a feminist geographer investigating the human dimensions of water through participatory methodologies. Her doctoral dissertation explored gender contracts in smallholder irrigation farming systems in Kenya and Tanzania. Her current research revolves around the gendered embodied dimensions of natural resource extraction and how those are manifested through water pollution and scarcity. She is conducting research in West Virginia and Latin America. She is the coordinating lead author of the water chapter of the Working

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## FLASHBACK

In 1928, SWG member Margaret Mead set off to investigate the Melanesian peoples of Manus Island in the Admiralty chain. For six months she lived in a village and wrote her second book *Growing Up in New Guinea* detailing her study of the Manus, a New Guinea people still untouched by the outside world when she visited them.

Mead was an innovator in technique, employing film and photography to document her studies. In addition, she was one of the first in her field to include child rearing as a cultural ingredient and to conduct pioneering studies on generational links and gender roles, recording the status of women in a

number of cultures. In all of her field work she assumed the same role that was prescribed for the native women to avoid cultural divergence and the imposition of her mores on the group under study.

An SWG member from 1929 until her death in 1978, Mead received the second Gold Medal from SWG in 1942 for her research among indigenous people in Samoa and New Guinea.

These photographs in the SWG archives provide a glimpse into Mead's studies of the village and her award.



Mead with Kawa, 1928-29.



Mead wears a costume worn by widows. The beadwork is obtained before death by the husband and the woman's male relatives after extended bargaining.



SWG President Frances Carpenter Huntington presents the Gold Medal to Margaret Mead, 1942.



Mead visiting the primary school in Pere, 1964. During her lifetime, she returned to the Island seven more times.

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Group II of the upcoming IPCC Assessment Report. She is also concerned with the gendered impacts of the neoliberal academia, specifically focusing on mentoring and support practices among junior geography faculty. Her work has been published in *The AAG Annals*, *Gender Place and Culture*, *The Geographical Journal*, *Qualitative Research* and other journals.



**Christine Morel** discovered the world as soon as she was born to parents of different nationalities living in a country not their own and who moved to Morocco when she was seven months old. She graduated in foreign languages/translation and civil law, but fate soon had her start working as a trainee at a French newspaper and then climb the ladder in the Paris real estate world, where she stayed about 12 years, reaching the managing director position.

However, when she was 32, she decided to take a turn in her professional life as she wanted a more international environment, and this is when she entered the sphere of big international sports events on the TV side, behind cameras. This led her to live in various countries such as Korea, South Africa, Brazil, Qatar and Russia. She speaks five languages fluently and is conversational in Russian, which helped a lot in discovering the remote areas of Russia where one can converse with locals. In all the continents she travels to, she extensively visits places that are not touristic and mainly focuses on culture, people, fauna and flora, but turquoise waters and white sandy beaches are a must occasionally!

Ecology, protecting Mother Nature as a whole, educating youngsters and not-so-young people regarding recycling or not wasting paper at the office and in general are topics that Christine is really concerned about; therefore she chose to become a member of the Sea Shepherd organization.

## Sohn Ca Lâm

Sohn Ca Lâm is a PhD candidate at the Graduate School of Geography at Clark University. Her dissertation research, funded in part by the SWG's 2017-18 Evelyn L. Pruitt National Fellowship for Dissertation Research, investigates the impact of forced displacement on the everyday practices that establish home for Vietnamese women from refugee backgrounds in 10 families through three generations: grandmothers in the U.S. and Việt Nam, mothers (first displaced generation) in the U.S., and granddaughters (second generation) born in the U.S. Using qualitative methods, including semistructured interviews, oral stories, participant observations and video ethnography; So'n Ca has collected rich visual data on the daily practices of homemaking as well oral stories of loss, survival and resilience over the past 19 months of field work. In September 2017, her research brought her to Việt Nam for three months to interview Vietnamese grandmothers with refugee families in the U.S. On a typical day of field work, she shadows a grandmother, mother, or granddaughter in her homeplace and films her daily rituals cooking, cleaning, running errands, socializing, going to work etc.



In Việt Nam, bà (grandmother), who is 83 years old, wakes up at 2 a.m. when her youngest daughter begins making *xôi* (sticky rice) to sell at the market. Bà reads the Bible until her youngest daughter pushes the *xôi* cart to the market at 6 a.m. At 8 a.m., bà walks to a food stand in the alleyway of her house to get *cơm tấm bì* (broken rice with shredded pork) for breakfast. Bà's education was interrupted in third grade when the French shut down schools in the countryside. Although she now lives in the southern region of Việt Nam, she speaks Vietnamese with a northern accent — an indication of multiple relocations as a result of the Việt Nam-American War. Her third daughter (the mother generation) left Việt Nam over 25 years ago.

On the other side of the world in the U.S., the mother begins her day at 7 a.m. making breakfast for the family, as bà's granddaughter gets ready for work. Breakfast consists of rice and leftover dinner from the day before: stir-fried tomato with minced pork, and tofu. When the granddaughter goes work at 9 a.m., spending a hectic day in back-to-back meetings, the mother is home doing *việc không tên*, which translates into “nameless work,” meaning house chores. “The difference between English and Vietnamese is that things are reversed (dates, names, adjectives),” says the mother. She recalls her

kids switching the order of their adjectives when they spoke Vietnamese, after their first year in the U.S. “If you can't speak the language, it is hard to keep the culture because you need to communicate with your elders to learn it, otherwise how would you know it?”

Bà and the mother FaceTime each other every other day when it is morning in Việt Nam and night in Boston. More than 40 years after the end of Việt Nam-American War, the U.S. is home to the largest Vietnamese diaspora in the world. So'n Ca's research considers the everyday context in which women continually (re)make home in ways that define collective belonging for a diasporic people over generations.

## Kelsey Brain



Over the past two decades, a growing number of North Americans and Europeans have left their homes and moved to rural destinations throughout the global south in search of lower-cost access to amenities such as large properties, pleasant climates or beautiful beaches. Kelsey Brain's dissertation research, funded in part by the SWG's 2017-18 Evelyn L. Pruitt National Fellowship for Dissertation Research, examines the effects of this global amenity migration on local land use, livelihoods and equitable development in Costa Rica. Kelsey is a PhD candidate in geography and women's studies at the Pennsylvania State University. As a feminist geographer, she draws on women-of-color feminism, feminist political ecology and decolonial feminist theory to examine, and support resistance to, social and environmental injustices through her research and teaching.

In 2017-18, accompanied by her two children, Kelsey completed 11 months of dissertation fieldwork in coastal Talamanca in the southern



Caribbean region of Costa Rica. A historically isolated region, Talamanca is home to several indigenous groups and a significant population of Afro descendants who arrived in the late 1800s to build a national railroad and work on banana plantations. However, since the 1990s, Costa Rican policies meant to attract foreign investors to buy property in Costa Rica to help the country recover from the 1980s debt crisis have transformed this rural coastline into a popular tourist and amenity migrant destination. Kelsey's research investigates the equitability of amenity-driven development as well as the effects of this development on local indigenous and Afro-descendant residents' livelihoods and land uses. These questions are important to amenity destinations throughout the global south but are particularly salient within the context of marginalization and underrepresentation experienced by many of coastal Talamanca's residents. Talamanca has the highest percentage of racial minorities (indigenous and Afro descendants) in the country at 61 percent of the canton's population and a 46.5 percent poverty rate in comparison to Costa Rica's national average poverty rate of 21.7 percent (National Institute of Statistics and Census 2011).

Residents of coastal Talamanca are experiencing rapid changes in their environment, property rights, livelihood opportunities and ability to influence decisions that affect them. Kelsey's research tells hopeful stories of residents who have made ways to thrive in the midst of these changes, from forming co-op chocolate farms to creating bed-and-breakfasts that promote Afro descendants' food culture to hosting fishing tournaments that spread knowledge about the invasive lionfish species and reduce its numbers in the region. Yet Kelsey's research also documents significant displacement for local residents, from their land, their livelihoods and their role in community decision making. Importantly, her research examines the ways these experiences are mediated by race, class and gender in Talamanca, affecting local residents in diverging ways. Kelsey collaborates with the local Ecotourism and Conservation Association and the Cultural House to share the results of her research with the community. In the future, she hopes to work with these affiliations to further investigate the plurality of ways that local Afro-descendant and indigenous residents make sense of their changing natural and social environment and act in response to that change.

# My Work, My World

## Giving a Voice to Biodiversity by Kira Sadler, MSc

I have always cared deeply about other species. While my curiosity about human cultures of the world inspired me to study anthropology at the University of Colorado in Boulder, it was my love for the natural world that brought me to the University of Kent in Canterbury, England, to complete a master's degree in conservation biology. The Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology at the University of Kent is based in the anthropology department, so my conservation education linked my curiosity and passion with a focus on how people impact and are impacted by conservation efforts. I came to understand that people and their ideas, cultures, preferences and actions must be considered in every effort to conserve the natural world and that people's perceptions and worldviews dictate their interactions with and actions toward the environment. Reversing damage to ecosystems is rarely successful unless the surrounding human communities are involved.

When I first encountered Voices for Biodiversity (V4B) in 2010, I remember thinking that I was born to be a part of this unique project. V4B is a multimedia platform that is completely inclusive in who we publish. We help people of all ages, regardless of their writing ability, to share their stories about nature. I have been co-director since 2017, sharing the responsibility of running the organization with ethnobotanist and environmental and indigenous rights advocate Nejma Belarbi, M.Sc., M.H. Through publication, our team works to empower our writers to speak out as environmental advocates, imprint the tremendous and intrinsic value of biodiversity upon our readers and encourage everyone to be a voice for biodiversity.

Species are going extinct at an unprecedented rate, potentially 10,000 times what is expected. With fewer species, species diversity also declines and damages ecosystems. Biodiversity — literally the diversity of life — creates resilient ecosystems. Most scientists agree that biodiversity loss may be just as damaging to humanity as climate change. Because humans are largely responsible for the current biodiversity crisis, we are capable of reversing it. The V4B team believes that changing human perceptions to include the tremendous intrinsic value of biodiversity is the first step toward saving and even enhancing biodiversity.

Have you ever read a story of someone's experience that touched you deeply and changed the way you see the world?



MARLEY GHARRITY (AGE 12)



MICHELLE MCCARRON

A 2013 study published in *Science* found that individuals who read narratives with in-depth portrayals of an individual's thoughts and inner feelings were more able to understand worldviews contrary to their own and had increased empathy for such individuals and perspectives. We draw on this science and our own experience with storytelling to increase our readers' empathy for other species and ecosystems.

The loudest voices in the field of conservation (and elsewhere) tend to be academics, politicians and formally trained journalists, and among those groups, the individuals speaking out are often Caucasian and male. V4B strives to bring diversity to conversations about biodiversity loss and conservation. We share the voices of individuals from all over the world, people of all ages, ethnicities, educational backgrounds and gender identities who have experiences with nature and conservation that have the potential to inspire. Our team of editors, transcribers and translators works to

bring these stories to publication. Moreover, whenever we can, we give a voice to other species that cannot tell their stories themselves.

In February, we published a photo gallery and interviews with children involved with the Field Institute of Taos in New Mexico. The children, aged 6 through 13, were able to share their photos and ideas about how to best conserve nature.

Children often go unheard, but we have found they offer common-sense insights into how to best take care of our planet.

Another article was by Niyonkuru (Chris) Benjamin, a young Rwandan man who began to truly appreciate biodiversity through his experience publishing with V4B. He says, "After getting a chance to work with Voices for Biodiversity, I was interested in everything around me and deeply thankful for the possibility of knowing more about conservation. I want to take care of nature within my country and share this information with my people."

We also recently published an article by attorney Will Falk titled "How Do Dams Fall? Conversations With the Colorado River." In this tremendous testimony, Falk's lyrical writing and vivid experiences give the Colorado River a powerful voice.

While V4B always aims to give a voice to those who are not usually heard, including women, people of color and youth, we are especially thrilled when we are truly being voices for biodiversity, other species and ecosystems.

I close with an invitation to join our community. We would love to connect you with others in our network working on similar issues, to promote your important environmental work on our social media platforms and ideally to publish your story and help you be a voice for biodiversity. Please check out our website [VoicesforBiodiversity.org](http://VoicesforBiodiversity.org), connect with us on social media or get in touch with me at [Kira@voicesforbiodiversity.org](mailto:Kira@voicesforbiodiversity.org).

*Kira Sadler is a new member of SWG.*



NYONKURU (CHRIS) BENJAMIN





The Society of Woman Geographers  
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Washington, DC 20003 USA

## For Women Who Know No Boundaries

**SAVE THE DATE**..... **FREE**

## From Earth to Sky: Women Making a Difference in Geography

April 2, 2019 from 9:30 am–4:00 pm

Library of Congress, Kluge Center

This all-day meeting will kick off with a discussion of the contributions women have made to the field of geography and inspire participants to contribute to strengthening the role of women in geography today.