



THE GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES

NSW GEOGRAPHY HONOURS CONFERENCE 2012

University of Sydney,

Friday 16 November



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

Welcome

The Council of the Geographical Society of NSW extends a warm welcome to all participants attending the NSW Geography Honours Conference, 2012. Established in 1927, the mission of the Geographical Society is to elevate the discipline of geography, as well as to excite and engage the public in geography. This conference began 16 years ago as an opportunity for Honour-students to show-case their work and provide an opportunity to meet other people who are passionate about engaging in geographical research.

The conference rotates between Schools where geography is taught within the universities of NSW. Each year the Council is indebted to staff at the host institution for organising the conference. This year the Council is indebted to the generosity of the School of Geosciences, Sydney University, and particularly Associate Prof Bill Pritchard. The Council extends a sincere thank you to all those people that helped make this conference possible.

To help you stay connected with the Geographical Society, those presenting are reminded that your registration fee also provides membership to the Geographical Society of New South Wales for one year. Please make sure that you provide Rosalie Atie (R.Atie@uws.edu.au), the Society's administration officer with your contact details. Enjoy the day, make new friends and stay connected with the Geographical Society of New South Wales.

Prof Gordon Waitt
President
Geographical Society of NSW

The Geography group within the School of Geosciences is pleased to host the 2012 NSW Geography Honours Conference. The NSW Geography Honours Conference is an annual event which showcases the diversity of Honours-level research being undertaken in the field of Geography across Universities in NSW.

Like previous years, we aspire that the Conference provides both an intellectual forum, and a space for mingling amongst students, academic staff and other observers. Geography is a diverse discipline. Each of the Universities across NSW has its own areas of expertise and focus, which in turn inform the topics developed by Honours students. For this one day every year, we provide a space for the cross-fertilisation of this range of research. So please come along, listen, learn and enjoy.



Assoc Prof Bill Pritchard,
Honours coordinator, School of Geosciences
Associate Dean, Honours, Faculty of Science

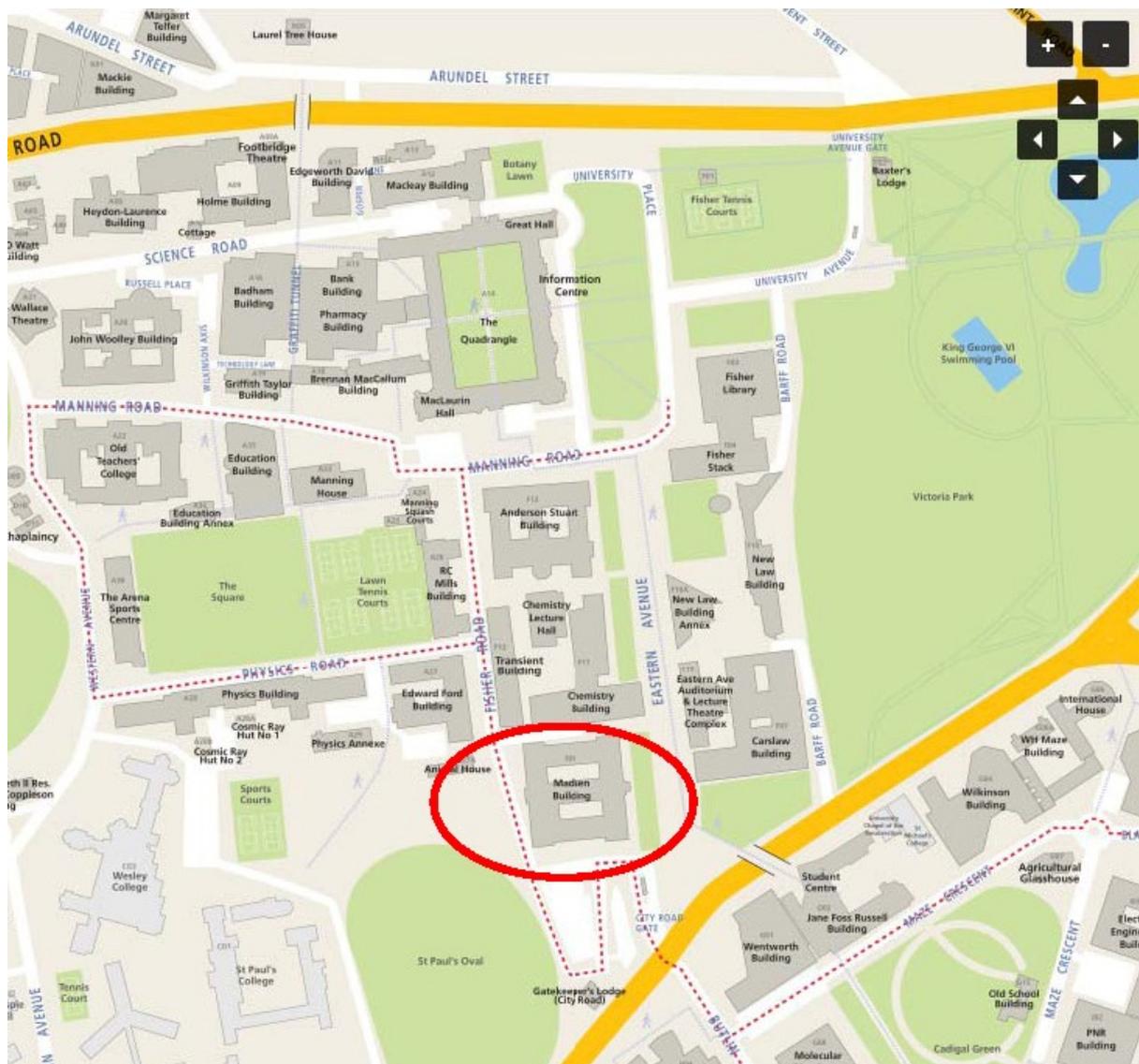
Location

The Conference will be held at the Conference Room, Madsen Building, University of Sydney.

How to get there

The Madsen Building is on the main (Camperdown) campus of the University of Sydney. It is adjacent to City Road (also known as the Princes Highway, linking Sydney's CBD southwards through Newtown and the southern suburbs towards Wollongong).

To access the Conference Room, enter the Madsen Building from the front door, on Eastern Avenue. We will have signage up on the day.



Program

- 9.20 Welcome, Bill Pritchard (University of Sydney)
- 9.30 Kathleen Blair, University of Western Sydney
Multiculturalism in Australia: The Dis/connection between policy and people
- 10.00 Clare Brennan, University of Newcastle
Urban carbon governance: mechanisms, practices and politics
- 10.20 David Clifton, University of Wollongong
Geographies of football: Why do men play football in the Bega Valley, NSW
- 10.40 Chloe Desgrand, University of Sydney
The sands of time: Decadal scale responses of coastal sand dunes in relation to climate variation in southeast Australia
- 11.00 morning tea**
- 11.30 Rupert Doney, University of Newcastle
Social mix, partnership and the problematisation of social housing
- 11.50 Cathy Forbes, University of Newcastle
Being and becoming in a climate changing world: affective energies, embodied subjectivities and visual art
- 12.10 Charles Gillon, University Of Wollongong
A new way of living with nature? Zones of friction and traction in Nangarin Vineyard Estate, a rural residential estate in Sydney's South-West
- 12.30 Nerida Godfrey, University of New South Wales
Apples in Orange
- 12.50 lunch**
- 1.40 Jackett, Jennifer, The University of Sydney
Life on the Edge: An everyday geography of people flows and the social co-construction of peri-urban space at the Bangalore periphery, India.
- 2.10 Ryan Jones, University of Newcastle
Risk, Trees and the politics of ontology
- 2.30 afternoon tea**
- 2.50 Beth Laurenson, University of Wollongong
Flat-Packing the suburbs: IKEA, Tempe, and a sense of place
- 3.10 Grace Michell, University of Sydney
Engaging communities for success: Moving beyond SIA requirements at Northparkes Mine, NSW
- 3.30 Felicity O'Neill, University of Sydney
Mobilising migration? The social and technical mobilisation of personal networks, community and work in Goulburn
- 3.50 Alex Tindale, University of Wollongong
Heterogeneous households: geographies of inter-ethnic intimacy in NSW
- 4.10 end of presentations
- 4.30 Presentation of awards.
- 5.00 close of Conference

Kathleen Blair, University of Western Sydney

Multiculturalism in Australia: The Dis/connection between Policy and People

In the four decades since its introduction, multiculturalism in Australia has been a contested policy and concept. In this time, Australia's multicultural policies have evolved in response to the changing priorities of the Australian government and to the many challenges facing the Australian community. While Australia's multicultural policy has its roots in government responses to the post-settlement issues of migrants, multicultural policy has been constructed and utilised as a component of Australia's nation building narrative. In the past ten years much public and political debate has occurred, questioning the role of multiculturalism in the context of increased cultural diversity. This study aimed to analyse the complexities and contradictions of multiculturalism in Australia. A qualitative research methodology was employed, involving the use of multiple methods to facilitate an analysis between two data sets. A CDA of three multicultural policies, New Agenda (1999), UID (2003) and TPOA (2011) was employed to identify and examine the discourses that constitute multiculturalism and their reconstruction since 1999 to the present. Focus groups were held in order to identify and thematically analyse the issues, attitudes, opinions and experiences of young adults (aged 18 – 25) from Penrith in regards to multiculturalism. A combined analysis was undertaken in which the data was compared and contrasted, drawing out connections and disconnections and ultimately concluding how the data sets affect each other. The findings of this research indicate that the reconstruction of multicultural policy has had a significant impact on the attitudes of young adults towards multiculturalism. The contradictions that exist between the policies of the Howard and Gillard eras have resulted in a conflation between a pro-multiculturalism stance and a desire for cultural homogeneity.

Clare Brennan, University of Newcastle

Urban carbon governance: mechanisms, practices and politics

The ever-growing body of literature on climate governance has predominantly focused on the role of international and national regimes, with far less attention paid to the role of cities in governing carbon. However, the perceived ineffectiveness of international and national schemes has recently led to the emergence of the city as a potentially innovative site for the development of new approaches to carbon governance; cities are focal points of intense social, knowledge and material resources. In this light, this paper seeks to explore the role of urban governments as drivers of carbon governance experimentation at the local scale. Drawing on case studies of local government initiatives in Sydney, the role of local governments is examined using a governmentality-informed framework. This framework draws connections between governing rationalities, and the way these shape new spaces and mechanisms of carbon governance. In taking on this new carbon governance role, local governments utilise experimental mechanisms, governing in new political spaces, without official authority to do so. Developing understandings of how local governments venture into new, unsanctioned spheres of experimental governance, provides the basis for understanding emerging political ramifications of new carbon governance frameworks

David Clifton, University of Wollongong

Geographies of football: Why do men play football in the Bega Valley, NSW

Previous studies have illustrated the central role of football in the cultural life of country towns in Western Australia and Victoria. Yet, little is known about the role of football in the country towns of New South Wales. The aim of this thesis is to provide a better understanding of why men play football in NSW country towns, through a case study of the Bega Valley. The empirical data is derived from twenty-one semi-structured interviews utilising a 'topical life history' approach, along with participant sketches of 'what football means to them'. Football life history interviews were conducted during August and September 2011 with adult men who play first grade rugby league and AFL (Australian Rules Football) in the Bega Valley, NSW. Narrative analysis, along with discourse analysis, is employed to provide an interpretation of the football life histories and sketches. Football players' narratives and sketches are analysed within a performative framework drawing upon the spatial concepts of 'the spatial imperative of subjectivity', a 'progressive sense of place' and the 'intersectionality' of social categories. Results are divided into three chapters. Each chapter analyses and discusses different football narratives to better understand why men play football in the Bega Valley, NSW. The first chapter examines narratives of family, friends and fitness. The second examines narratives of mateship. The final results chapter turns to explore narratives of winning and sustainability. The conclusion outlines how this study has contributed to understanding why men play football and a more nuanced understanding of football and footballers in the cultural life of country towns in the Bega Valley.

Chloe Desgrand, University of Sydney

The sands of time: Decadal scale responses of coastal sand dunes in relation to climate variation in southeast Australia

The responses of coastal dunes to climatic perturbations may be rapid over a decadal scale, however, little is known in the Australian context. The main objective of this study was to establish the critical climatic factors controlling dune evolution and stability on a decadal scale between 1976 and 2009 in SE Australia at the Fens, Seal Rocks, and Crescent to Hat Head Embayments. Aerial photography coupled with climatic data was used to quantify the change in percentage vegetation cover and rate of transgression. Six main climatic factors were considered: maximum temperature, maximum wind gusts, rainfall, evaporation, East coast low pressure systems (ECL), and El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO). A long-term increase in vegetation cover (1 and 14.5 %) and continual transgression (1.2 to 2.2 m yr⁻¹) were observed throughout the study period indicating areas of stability and instability. Transgression was found to be predominantly driven by the aeolian erosion of sediment from the deflation basin. Erosion of the deflation basin has brought the surface of the dunes into greater contact with the water table facilitating the increase in vegetation cover in this area. A reduction in wind strength and the severity of ECL storms since 2000 is reducing the frequency of foredune scarping thereby promoting the overall increase in foredune vegetation coverage. Decadal scale fluctuations in sediment moisture were shown to be responsible for the varying magnitude of change in each period with the largest rates of transgression in 1976-1986 occurring during arid and thus low sediment moisture conditions. The rate of transgression in the previous period was shown to influence the level of vegetation cover in the following period. High transgression rates during 1976-1986 were followed by significant increases in vegetation cover between 1986 and 2000. On a decadal scale the severity of ECLs and wind strength were also a limiting factor on foredune vegetation cover. The findings of this study were used to forecast the response of coastal dunes to future climatic conditions under three scenarios: continued modal conditions, anthropogenic-induced atmospheric climatic changes, and sea level rise.

Rupert Doney, University of Newcastle

Social mix, partnership and the problematisation of social housing

Social housing in Australia is at a significant juncture. High levels of housing stress, increasing levels of socio-spatial polarisation and reduced government funding are presenting complex policy scenarios. This paper investigates the adoption of social mix policies and partnership arrangements as a means to address these obstacles in the delivery of social housing renewal. This research centres on the construction of social housing as a particular type of 'problem', which then suggests an appropriate solution: social mix, delivered through partnership. This problematisation is examined in the context of government policy and shifting institutional settings. Two social housing renewal projects—Telopea and Riverwood North in Sydney— are used as case studies. This research explores two distinct discourses of social mix that each problematize social housing and suggest different understandings of social mix as a solution. It draws on interviews with a range of government, private sector and not-for-profit housing practitioners. Analysis of the findings shows social mix to be far more complex than simply managing the cohabitation of residents in public and private tenures. It is embedded within complex understandings and discourses of the nature and causes of disadvantage. On the one hand partnership is shown to present limits to how aspirations for social mix can be achieved. On the other hand however it is also shown to present possibilities in the delivery of social

Cathy Forbes, University of Newcastle

Being and becoming in a climate changing world: affective energies, embodied subjectivities and visual art

This Honours thesis proposes the affective role of art as shaping a more sustainable and ethical way of being in a climate changing world. By reimagining climate change as an ethical, societal and cultural concern, I suggest that solutions to climate change lie within our individual and collective ways of being in the world. Climate change solutions therefore become less about explicit actions, and more about longer-term shifts to these ways of being. In viewing the subject as always becoming, shifts can occur through the smallest bodily intensities, and in the creative thoughts that flutter from our pre-conscious registers as part of an embodied-mind/culture assemblage. In this thesis, I undertake a more-than-representational exploration of Climate Change Art to show that through affective encounters, our bodies can become engaged, orchestrated and bound to new ways of being. New constituencies of being can emerge that are more ethical, caring and generous to the world—that seek less to prioritise the human over nature, or even suggest there is a dualism between the two. What I suggest throughout

this project is that these shifts can occur as part of a project of becoming, a project that can be stimulated by becoming more sensitive and responsive to the affective energies of the world.

Charles Gillon, University Of Wollongong

A new way of living with nature? Zones of friction and traction in Nangarin Vineyard Estate, a rural residential estate in Sydney's South-West

This thesis asked whether the rural residential estate is a human settlement space in which society can live 'better' with nature. Answering this question hinged on the identification of zones of friction and zones of traction (Head et al, in prep.) in the rural residential estate – ruptures and resiliences created by this unique experiment in urban design, and expressed through the everyday rhythms of residents. The thesis evaluated the rural residential estate using the study site of Nangarin Vineyard Estate, located near Picton, NSW. The materiality of this setting incorporates residential landuse and remnant bushland, facilitating an enmeshing of humans and non-humans in space. The study is conceptually framed around non-representational theory, a relational ontology used to re-frame the complexity of interactions between human and non-human actors. Reflecting this, semi-structured walking interviews were conducted with Nangarin residents to both enrol the non-human in research design, and to explore how residents have constructed their use of the estate. This method was combined with frequent self-tours of the estate, to elicit place-based engagement for the researcher. Results explored the complexity of interactions that take place between humans and nature in Nangarin estate. This research concluded that despite the material shell created by the rural residential estate, there is still a fixity expressed by humans towards how they enrol the non-human. This involved the creation of borders and territories that serve to exclude the non-human. The threads of the thesis were brought together through an exploration of zones of friction and zones of traction in the rural residential estate. Such frictions and tractions present opportunities and threats for pursuing future developments of this nature.

Merida Godfrey, University of New South Wales
Apples in Orange

This project seeks to uncover how 'the games of citizenship' (Tully, 1999) are played out within the community of apple orchardists in Orange, in central western New South Wales. Following Gill (2011), this project considers how the shift to neoliberal governance and management in the agricultural sector has influenced the perspectives, actions, and morphology of a community of farmers. Drawing from in-depth interviews conducted with apple orchardists in and around Orange, this thesis discusses how the orchardists articulate their professional identity, and the character of their community. To ascertain how the orchardists accept or reject citizenly responsibilities, the interviews sought to identify the orchardists' opinions of 'biggest threats' to the industry and how they situate responsibility for mitigating these threats. Activism, in its various forms, and the orchardists perception of the 'usefulness' of activism endeavours is also discussed and contextualised in terms of the future prospects for orchards in the Orange region.

Jackett, Jennifer, The University of Sydney

Life on the Edge: An everyday geography of people flows and the social co-construction of peri-urban space at the Bangalore periphery, India.

In the developing world, rapid urbanisation is transforming the nature of rural-urban interactions. Increasingly, the boundaries of metropolitan systems are expanding into their formerly rural hinterlands, engulfing farmlands and villages. This is creating emergent hybrid spaces through a process of *peri-urbanisation* in which peoples' everyday lives are being dramatically transformed. India represents an exemplary case of such unprecedented demographic and rural-urban spatial transformation, most notably in Bangalore, where there has been an explosion of industrial growth at the agricultural fringe following national economic liberalisation in the early 1990s. In order to understand the complexities of these processes, this study submerses the official discourses and understandings of urbanisation, utilising a people-centred approach to engage with the microcosms of everyday peri-urban life. To support the hypothesis that *people* represent active agents in shaping the process of periurbanisation, Interviews were undertaken with sixty-one commuters from three distinct villages on Bangalore's fringe, in addition to eighteen key informants from key planning and government agencies. The holistic framework adopted through this study aims to address the core research problem of current peri-urban literature: that the everyday experiences of people in transforming the peri-urban interface remain largely unaccounted. Ultimately, the empirical evidence gained through this study provides critical insight into the manner in which peri-urban

inhabitants find themselves at the centre of adaptation and transition, shaping the possibilities of pervasive socio-spatial change.

Ryan Jones, University of Newcastle
Risk, Trees and the Politics of Ontology

Local politics in Newcastle, NSW, has recently been dominated by a contentious and protracted debate about risk and the future of a group of trees called the Laman Street Figs. For some local councillors and the council's tree staff, the Laman Street Figs were a significant risk to public safety that had to be removed and replaced. However, this position brought them into conflict with a community group that felt the Laman Street Figs were *at* risk more than they were *a* risk. Drawing on science and technology studies and more-than-representational geography, this paper examines how multiple kinds of risk were performed for the Laman Street Figs. The paper argues that different kinds of risk are performative because the more-than-human actors, practices, and relations that enact them also trigger material responses that shape and change the 'nature' of reality. The paper argues the notion of ontological politics is a useful way of thinking about risk because certain kinds of risk make certain kinds of worlds when alternatives are also possible. Ontological politics challenges conventional notions of what risk *is* and it provides risk researchers with some new insights for grappling with the complex and hybrid 'nature' of risk.

Beth Laurenson, University of Wollongong
Flat-Packing the Suburbs: IKEA, Tempe, and a Sense of Place

This thesis explored the influence of recently-arrived big-box retail stores on the senses of place of residential populations. It aimed to further the understanding of challenges posed by big-box retailers to surrounding communities – beyond the narrow economic focus previously dominating the literature. A range of human geographical theories were used to investigate senses of place of Tempe residents, and whether the 2011 opening of IKEA Tempe influenced these senses. A mixed-methodology comprising interviews – both sedentary and mobile – and mental mapping was used to capture spatial and biographical responses. Results offer new insights into the influence of big-box industry on senses of place, in Tempe found to be informed by resident's shared experiences of gentrification-related community transition, post-industrial economic shifts, and place attachment. Despite such shared phenomena, senses of place were complex, plural, and often conflicting. Second, IKEA's influence on senses of place was found to be overly subtle, but complex. IKEA did not dramatically unsettle resident's senses of place. Often, IKEA was viewed through a middle-class lens as putting Tempe "on the map" and redressing stigmas as a downtrodden, dirty place. Conversely, material attachments to place were influenced very little. Some tensions were created through resulting traffic management and streetscape changes, and these challenged conceptions of a strong "community spirit". Nevertheless, the retailer made only minor changes to most people's everyday practices, rhythms, and movements. I argue that, as additions to suburb assemblages, incoming big-box retailers influence not only economic conditions but social and cultural landscapes. I call for deeper research, as much scope exists to expand this knowledge and to better inform those responsible for urban planning of the proclivities of local communities.

Grace Michell, University of Sydney
Engaging communities for success: Moving beyond SIA requirements at Northparkes Mine, NSW

Social issues are critical to the mining industry. This study investigates how social issues have been, and are being, assessed and managed within this industry and how this might change in the future. Research at Northparkes Mines in Central West NSW, involved 29 interviews with mining executives, environmental consultants and citizens of Parkes, plus a media analysis of significant events and a document analysis of four Environmental Impact Statements prepared between 1990 and 2012. Where appropriate, findings were extrapolated to the wider mining industry. The standard for Social Impact Assessment in NSW and emerging industry guidelines on social responsibility were analysed against internationally accepted good practice. Interviews indicated greater potential to recognise the social side of mining in NSW and identified good practice impact assessment as only one component of a successful community engagement strategy. Complementary strategies are essential to extend the benefits of development to local communities and for companies to establish a 'social licence to operate'. The successful approach taken by Northparkes Mines combined good practice impact assessment with a localised workforce, an integrated management team and context specific community engagement practices. This study highlights that local communities can be empowered through development, that benefits can extend to both the

community and the business and that in the future, the ongoing management of social issues will be critical to the success of the mining industry.

Felicity O'Neill, University of Sydney

Mobilising migration? The social and technical mobilisation of personal networks, community and work in Goulburn

No abstract provided

Alex Tindale, University of Wollongong

Heterogeneous households: geographies of inter-ethnic intimacy in NSW

In Australia, and other immigrant societies, inter-ethnic couples constitute a sizeable and growing sub-population with unique experiences of, and exposure to, racism. These couples, and their children, are contributing to a shifting ethnic 'landscape', characterised by growing heterogeneity. However, inter-ethnic intimacy has received scant attention in Australian scholarship, particularly within geography. This project used 2006 Census data to investigate the residential geographies of a socially significant subset of inter-ethnic couples (referred to as 'in-group/out-group' couples) across NSW. These intimate relationships bridge the perceived divide between the Anglo-Australian/European ethnicities that form the dominant (white) in-group in Australian society; and those ethnic groups that continue to be excluded from imaginaries of national identity and belonging. This study documents the prevalence of inter-ethnic (in-group/out-group) couples in NSW, and considers how their residential geographies offer new insights into the nature of ethnic 'mixing' and the spatial distribution of ethnic diversity.