

ABSTRACTS: RETI CONFERENCE
(Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, July 4–5, 2014)

This book of abstracts should be read in conjunction with the RETI Program to establish the timing and location of the presentations.

SESSION 1: POLITICALLY SPEAKING...

Session Chair: Don Desserud

Department of Political Science, University of Prince Edward Island

1.

Revisiting the geostrategic significance of islands: The case of the Indian Ocean's small islands

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Historically, small islands have played a significant geostrategic role in the Indian Ocean. From the ancient Persians' and Arabs' links with Pemba and Zanzibar on the Eastern African coasts, to Diego Garcia in the Chagos Archipelago—which now hosts an American military base—as well as for the European colonial ventures in the Indian Ocean, several small islands have been viewed with interest and used by regional and foreign powers, especially for military purposes. Far from fading away, this geostrategic interest has been greatly renewed since the beginning of the twenty-first century as the Indian Ocean Region grows in importance in global geopolitics.

After addressing the historical context and the various military uses of small islands in the Indian Ocean, the paper analyzes the present situation in which China and India are now developing their interest and military presence in the islands. It also examines how the United States, France, and Australia are securing their positions, while Russia seeks new facilities in the region.

2.

Regional rebalance: American foreign policy in Asia-Pacific and the Republic of the Philippines

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The South China Sea is a contentious maritime region with overlapping contested jurisdictional claims from all neighbouring countries. These claims are most heavily pursued by China, as the regional superpower complete with significant maritime capacity and capabilities. Recent American (US) foreign policy places priority on an "Asia Pacific Rebalance" hinged upon an "Asia pivot" of US resources and funding into the region. These renewed strategic efforts appear to be aimed at countering or at least containing the People's Republic of China (PRC) through both hard and soft power and the various levers of international relations.

This presentation focuses on the Republic of the Philippines: a geopolitically important archipelagic nation, former American colony, and contestant of several particular cases of jurisdictional disputes with the PRC. This presentation analyzes recent developments in US-Philippine relations relating to international maritime law including the ongoing issue of Philippine archipelagic sea lanes, specific incidents of Philippine-PRC jurisdictional disputes, and the US-Philippine Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, signed April 28, 2014.

3.

Immediate return versus delayed return cultures and economic development: The cultural ecology of Polynesian and Chinese Hakka cultures in modern Tahiti¹

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Some groups with different cultural backgrounds and values may happen to live in the same country under the same set of formal institutions, yet show quite different cultural behaviours, according to norms and values inherited from a distant past. This kind of "path dependence" is due to the persistence of cultural traits that were adapted to a natural and economic environment that no longer exists.

Immediate return societies (typically nomadic hunter gatherers) have value systems based on sharing for survival and living in the present, while cultures issued from delayed return societies (typically peasant societies that rely on mass seasonal food storage for survival) have value systems based on accumulation, foresight, planning, and respect of long-term commitments. In the global context of a modern industrial society, groups issued from immediate return cultures will not adapt as well, because they have kept a value system lacking incentives for accumulation, foresight, planning, and long-term commitments.

¹ I have received help from Eric Conte, Alex du Prel, Vincent Dropsy, Zehra Gabillon, Bruno Saura, and Tamatoa Bambridge who have read earlier versions of this article, edited the English manuscript, or have answered my questions on Polynesian culture. To all of them I am very grateful.

To illustrate this point, I study two cultural groups living in French Polynesia: the small Chinese Hakka minority, issued from an ancient peasant civilization with delayed return values, and the Polynesian majority, issued from an immediate return society.

4.

**Benefits of preferential trade agreements for small island developing states (SIDS):
A case study on economic growth within the SPARTECA and PICTA trade agreements**

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Since 1990, the world has seen substantial growth of developing-state-to-developing-state preferential trade agreements (PTA) and, in many cases, developing states have scarce resources to effectively evaluate economic gains from such agreements. This paper is an empirical evaluation of economic growth to PTA by thirteen South Pacific small island developing states (SIDS) within the PTAs: Pacific Island Country Trade Agreement (PICTA) and South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA). A characteristic of the SIDS within the global economy is the high level of structural openness to trade. This paper identifies the vulnerability factors and provides supporting theory of the economic sensitivity to foreign economic development. Additionally, if evidence of growth is present, the study will shift to a comparative examination of a reciprocal PTA (PICTA) over a non-reciprocal (SPARTECA), in respect to the same group of SIDS.

SESSION 2: CULTURAL POLICY ON ISLANDS

Session Chair: Godfrey Baldacchino
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1.

New Island Studies in Okinawa

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This presentation aims to introduce the present situation of Okinawa, an island area in Japan, and to share ideas from the research project, "Toward New Island Studies: Okinawa as an Academic Node to Connect Japan and East Asia and Oceania," conducted by the International Institute for Okinawan Studies, University of the Ryukyus. The purpose of the project is to propose concrete solutions to various problems caused by features of islands,

such as health issues, utilization and conservation of natural environment, roles on security as border islands, and resource management. We will also discuss our new research, “Construction and Practice of the Model for Self-governing and Self-determination of Island Territories.” It explores how islands should take their initiatives in globalization and be more responsible to their own societies, comprising complex interrelated factors such as politics, economy, environment, and culture.

2.

Government impacts on islandness: The case for the Commonwealth of Dominica

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Population divisions exist in many forms and for many reasons. Even island communities, sometimes thought of as homogenous because of a geography-forced unity, can be immensely diverse. Yet, despite the diversity, there are many who believe in “islandness”—identification with the island that transcends differences and binds islanders together.

Through this paper, I investigate the ways in which the policies, departments, and actions of the government of the Commonwealth of Dominica encourage or discourage islandness. The investigation asks if the government feigns inclusivity so long as lifestyles align with the government’s agenda. To answer this question, I create a synthesis of primary and secondary sources to understand what the Dominican government’s main foci are in terms of culture. The results have potential to build understanding of islander identity and mobility. Understanding what does and does not promote islandness in Dominica may open windows into how we approach unity in other locations.

3.

Planning for rural sustainability on PEI: Mapping community’s socio-cultural values and places of importance

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The health and future sustainability of our coastal communities must be evaluated and planned by the people who live there and who appreciate their place in the environment. As an effective tool for rural-based planning, integrated resource management, and helping communities to prepare for the impacts of environmental, economic, and social change, socio-cultural values mapping (SCVM) can facilitate the collection of important geographical data that would support communities in their overall planning and sustainability goals. Moreover, it is an especially effective way of visualizing the important interconnections between the natural environment and human culture and facilitates the

sharing of information within and between communities about the places that they care about and value the most. One of the advantages of SCVM is that it can demonstrate, through the number of values indicated for an area, which places are most valued in a community. Identification of these valued areas through the creation of maps should therefore be at the heart of future rural development initiatives, which, in turn, should increase public involvement and generate improved governance and decision-making. Results from this work will not only show how people connect to their environment, but will also identify sensitive areas that should be protected from future development and climate change impacts.

SESSION 3: ISLAND IDENTITY: MAKERS AND MARKERS

Session Chair: Jim Randall

Master of Arts in Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island

1.

The watermills of Prince Edward Island

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When Europeans arrived on Prince Edward Island (PEI) in the 1700s, they discovered that the Island's ample rainfall, rolling hills, and numerous streams created the perfect environment for establishing watermills. During the next two centuries, PEI's landscape was transformed by the construction of more than three hundred watermills, with each mill contributing to the success of the Island's economy. Sawmills turned trees into lumber, gristmills ground flour and animal feed, and carding mills processed wool for yarn and cloth. Collectively, mills provided employment and state-of-the-art power for small enterprises; individually, they formed the nucleus of rural self-sufficient communities. In the early 1900s, PEI's watermills followed an international trend and gradually closed one by one, until today none remains operational. This paper examines the reasons behind the demise of small independent watermills on Prince Edward Island.

2.

Islands and their languages

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The relative isolation of many islands creates the conditions under which new languages evolve, contributing to a distinctive culture and sense of identity. In the last few decades, however, modern technologies in communication and transportation have reduced the isolation of many islands, creating pressure to abandon the traditional community language in favour of a more widely spoken “outside” language. This, in turn, has contributed to a sharp reduction in linguistic diversity in many parts of the world, and to corrective efforts by many indigenous island communities to preserve their traditional language.

In this presentation, we offer a case study of one such community on Korea's Jeju Island. Located about 60 miles from the Korean mainland, Jeju Island (area 700 square miles) has a population of about 600,000. Its indigenous language, Jejueo, is thought to have split from Old Korean a thousand years ago and cannot be understood by speakers of modern Korean. It is currently estimated that only 5,000 to 10,000 mostly elderly residents of Jeju Island still speak Jejueo.

The prospects for the survival of Jejueo appear grim, but a cooperative effort by several institutions (Jeju National University, the University of Hawai'i, the Smithsonian Institution, and UNESCO) is under way to develop a plan to revitalize and preserve the language, inspired by the success of two other island communities—the Hawai'ians and the Maori. Our presentation describes and evaluates these efforts in the broader context of cultural identity in island communities.

3.

Traditional dishes or fusion cuisine? An island journey

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Food has a great way of making connections and creating traditions. Humans associate food with traditional events, special occasions, family gatherings, forming relationships, or marking rites of passage. We also tend to associate certain types of dishes/food with certain countries (or islands). The book, *A Taste of Islands* (2012), edited by Anna and Godfrey Baldacchino, combines sixty traditional recipes from sixty islands around the world. Each recipe comes not only with the picture, ingredients, and method of the recipe,

but also a brief history of the island and the origins of the dish itself. Each island has its own traditional dish.

However, certain ingredients in so-called “traditional” dishes are actually not indigenous to the island itself. They have been introduced or brought over by seafarers, explorers, traders, and migrants. This paper will investigate some of these ingredients—such as the humble potato—and how they found their way into certain “traditional” dishes on different islands. The paper also provides an overview of some of the islands mentioned in the book and takes you on a culinary journey while getting a taste of islands in one sitting.

SESSION 4: HEALTHY POLICIES = HEALTHY ISLANDS

Session Chair: Lee Ellen Pottie

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1.

Population health, ecosystem health and a changing socioeconomic system: A case study of the Caribbean island of Dominica

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In the midst of a sustainability crisis, many small islands are experiencing a serious population health problem with the highest prevalence of non-communicable diseases in the world. From a holistic perspective, population health cannot be analyzed separately from economic, sociocultural, and ecological aspects, given an increasing understanding that links exist among all of them. Such links promise a high degree of complexity in the analysis of the population health problem faced by small islands, a complexity which is challenging, cannot be ignored, and yet has often been ignored.

This study analyzes population health in its entire complexity by using the island of Dominica as a case study, and suggests that small islands, as microcosms of the world, are extremely valuable in helping to identify, understand, and act upon the complex interactions among human health, ecosystem health, and the socioeconomic system, particularly for promoting the vision of healthy islands.

2.

Obesity and health challenges in the Canary Islands

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The Canary Islands is an archipelago in the Atlantic Ocean. The islands form one of the seventeen autonomous communities of Spain, and are recognized as one of the outermost regions of the European Union.

Health is strongly influenced by internal and external factors; the environment, how we live, work, and enjoy leisure time are influenced by social, cultural, economic, or environmental determinants. In the Canary Islands region, obesity and severe obesity are a serious health problem with rates of prevalence that are higher than on the mainland of Spain and which are still growing. Obesity among children and the adolescent population of the Canary Islands exceeds the national average, and is associated with a high incidence of sedentary lifestyle and passive leisure activity. Due to this rapid increase in prevalence and the associated health consequences, obesity is considered one of the most serious challenges of the early twenty-first century. The need for preventive action is increasingly recognized.

This paper describes the health problems associated with obesity in the Canary Islands, some of the determinants of this health problem, and provides suggestions for strategies to address the growing problem.

3.

Healthy islands as liveable islands

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This presentation examines the concept of “Healthy Islands,” as constructed during the first *Conference of the Ministers of Health of the Pacific Islands*, and compares this utopian definition with that of the culturally specific, defined by islanders of the Chiloé Archipelago. The concept poses challenges as it casts the healthy island as a bounded and universalized place, a neocolonial dream space. This closed depiction of islands encourages a paradigm where hard edges and boundaries are valued over seeing the totality of relationships. It allows for a separation of the global and the local. Using an “island imagination,” the connection among health, economies, and environments on islands displays a relational component. It is this relational view that allows the exploration of the following question: how do global economic policies (e.g., neoliberal practices) contribute towards illness/disease and environmental degradation on islands while also impeding an island’s ability to implement “healthy islands” policy?

4.

Sustaining island fishing communities: Policy and management in practice in Maine and Newfoundland

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Rural island and coastal communities and fisheries have a storied relationship in Maine and Newfoundland. This presentation focuses on the policy and management tools used to regulate fisheries and how communities have responded to changes. Six communities were used as case studies to demonstrate how communities were influenced by the methods that were used to limit catch (particularly licensing practices) in each region, and, conversely, how communities had responded to those methods, both in and out of the traditional management system. This research pays special attention to the role of each community's location on an island and the location of each community in relation to local economic service centres.

SESSION 5: CHANGING ENVIRONMENTS

Session Chair: Carolyn Peach-Brown

Department of Environmental Studies, University of Prince Edward Island

1.

Learning from Samsø: Renewable energy on small islands

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Over the duration of approximately ten years, the small Danish island of Samsø went from a reliance on fossil fuels to producing enough renewable energy that it exports electricity to Germany. For that reason, my research will compare Samsø and Prince Edward Island (Canada) in order to learn how to create such a transition here on PEI.

I compare the two islands in two important categories. First, I look at how each island is powered: how each island produces its electricity and its heat; the environmental sustainability of the energy produced (ocean acidification, climate change, water consumption); and the long-term resilience of these forms of energy production (eventual fees on carbon, increasing costs of fossil fuels, impacts of climate change on energy production). Second, I compare each island's policies regarding energy. This includes policies regarding energy conservation, energy efficiency, utilities, subsidies, and public awareness of energy issues.

Finally, I plan to travel to Samsø in order to discuss with the people who helped put in place that island's transition to a renewable energy system. The hope is to use the information gathered in order to put together a policy process that would help PEI put in place its own transition.

2.

Islands as reference stations for environmental studies: The case of Calvi Bay in Corsica

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Islands are subject to human activities and their impacts on land and marine ecosystems. They are also often isolated from some of the continental influences; but, on the other hand, different kinds of human activities can be concentrated in small areas. These characteristics make possible the management of many programs that use whole islands, or some of their parts, as a reference station for environmental studies.

From this perspective, the program STARE-CAPMED began in 2012 at STARESO, an oceanographic research station established at Calvi Bay (Corsica) in the early 1970s. It aims to create a reference station for the study of emerging local and global anthropogenic impacts on pristine marine ecosystems. Several universities are involved in this project and provide their expertise in various fields of marine sciences. This program provides a precise view of the environmental processes that are strongly linked with economic and cultural issues.

3.

Accessibility of islands: differences between geographical distance and accessibility potential in the Greek Aegean

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Accessibility is a multifaceted concept that expresses the ease of access between two points in space. For islands, accessibility is a key quality, since isolation and small size are considered inherent characteristics of "islandness." In this paper, we discuss differences between geographical distance and accessibility potential in the Greek Aegean, combining

different transportation modal choice (ferries and airplanes) with the use of an accessibility index that incorporates modes and frequency of connection and data of actual usage. The findings indicate that geographical distance is not a determiner of accessibility, and new geographies emerge based more on the availability of transport modal choices.

4.

Sustainable energy flows: Solar Mobility in Corsica

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One of the main axes of sustainable development is transportation, which is a major consumer of fossil fuels. In Corsica, introducing vehicles powered by electricity is one way in which the island is attempting to address the issue of sustainable energy.

However, my research shows that because electricity is produced thermally, and the network is performing poorly, the environmental performance of electric vehicles recharging on the classic grid is negative: carbon emissions and consumption rates are high, and electrical production requires a large up-front investment.

By carrying out a theoretical and experimental examination of model energy flows between several solar charging stations in Corsica (photovoltaic generation, energy storage, charging stations, and electric vehicles), I plan to:

- measure the photovoltaic power and investigate the storage solutions needed to maximize the solar energy actually used by vehicles, and then extrapolate the effects; and
- characterize the travel needs of the resident and tourist population, along with the social acceptability of powering vehicles with electricity.

SESSION 6: ART AND ISLANDNESS

Session Chair: Richard Lemm

Department of English, University of Prince Edward Island

1.

The art of island living: Exploring psychologies of islandness through art and literature

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By their very nature, islands seem conducive to rugged individualism *and* communal living. Over centuries of sticking it out in often the most extreme conditions, islanders have learned to work together to survive, even as the state of being “islanded” attracts loners and characters who are often larger than life. Using the emotional landscapes of art and literature to get at the psychologies of islandness, I explore island identity—through such island tropes as boundedness and connectedness, leaving and staying, tradition and change, insideness and outsideness—and all bound together through story. Why are so many artists attracted to island living? What do they have to teach us about living with particularity in a globalized society? Through interviews with artists on the east and west coast islands of Canada, and on the island of Tasmania and its offshore satellites, I explore the nuances of islandness.

2.

Skye’s the limit: The besieged island in Virginia Woolf’s *To the Lighthouse*

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My paper examines Virginia Woolf’s 1927 novel, *To the Lighthouse*, for the myriad ways in which it maps a range of overlapping political, cultural, and psychological anxieties onto a fictionalized island setting. Taking place on the Isle of Skye in the Scottish Hebrides, in the period before, during, and after the First World War, *To the Lighthouse* bears witness to the literary appeal of islands as cultural signifiers in a time of great social change. For Woolf and her characters, Skye constitutes a carefully delimited space wherein concerns over economic change, national and individual identity, and gender and sexual norms can be both engaged and assuaged. From her postwar vantage, Woolf looks back nostalgically upon her fictionalized island setting even as she acknowledges the cultural role that islands often play as harbingers of widespread change and upheaval.

3.

“Shut-up for five years”: Cultural workers from away making a home and business on Scottish islands

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This paper sets out to explore how cultural workers establish themselves on islands that they moved to. By looking at the narratives of cultural workers, from different disciplines

and different islands, one can start to explore the notion of “islander by choice” and see how being from “away” is helpful or a hindrance to being a successful entrepreneur. One clear finding is that having experience of island life—not necessarily from the island they are currently living on—helps the cultural workers navigate and become embedded in local networks. This will contribute to the understanding of island experiences from those not often in the forefront of island studies, and help to see how islands might better facilitate successful entrepreneurs.