

2018: Annual Report to the CAG/ACG on The Canadian Geographer – Le Géographe canadien

Overview

This is my eighth year of editing The Canadian Geographer. It has been quite a ride as we changed the graphic design of the journal, altered the work flow, moved to online only, grappled with a dynamic publishing environment and worked to improve our visibility and impact as a journal. Our mission is to enhance our content and increase our readership all while serving our constituent community of Canadian geographers. This report summarizes our position in the industry and in the discipline of geography, and focuses on emerging trends.

This report also summarizes and explains a number of metrics that describe the situation at The Canadian Geographer-Le Géographe Canadien (TCG-LGC) at the end of 2018.

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Emphasis in 2018

We are striving to maintain the reputation of the journal while also working hard to improve the day-to-day inner workings of *The Canadian Geographer*. To that end, we are trying to improve our authors’ experiences using the ScholarOne submission portal including working on adding French templates for some our author communication, continuing to build our reviewer database, further streamlining our work flow, and decreasing the time from submission to publication.

2018 marks the start of our transition from special issues to special sections. Many researchers are keen to bring together groups of scholars to report on unique approaches to research or emerging trends and we have a number of these in the works for 2019-2020. We no longer accept special issues as we have found that special sections serve the same purpose while allowing us to include individual papers in each issue. As the journal has been online only since January 2017, the combined issues are generally invisible to readers who tend to work with DOI numbers and focus on topics of interest – rather than read the journal cover to cover.

We continue to encourage authors to submit video abstracts. A number of key journals such as *Science* offer video abstracts and we view them as a means of distilling complex ideas so that readers can ‘sample’ a paper before committing to reading it. However, so far very few authors are submitting video abstracts, perhaps because it seems like another layer of work and there is a lack of institutional support for shooting and producing such videos.

As I mentioned in the 2012-2017 reports, all manuscripts are run through iThenticate – an online plagiarism detection program provided by our publisher, Wiley. This was the seventh year that we have used this service and when there are high scores, they continue to be principally to do with self-plagiarism. This is often legitimate as submitted papers can be based on white papers previously published online; they also draw from theses and dissertations.

Manuscript submissions

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Editor in Chief	35	41	46	40	40	52	65	48	51	65	51	37	62	66	61	68
French Editor	9	7	13	8	9	15	12	7	11	9	2	5	1	8	5	6
Physical Geo Editor	4	3	2	6	6	8	2	3	4	1	2	2	1	1	0	0
Humanities Editor	2	2	3	0	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	52	55	64	54	57	81	81	61	68	75	55	44	64	75	66	74

Table one: Original manuscript submissions 2002–2018, sorted by editor.

The submission count for 2018 shows a slight increase from the previous year. The trend for low numbers of physical geography and humanities submissions persists, with no manuscripts in either of those categories in 2018. Our first issue of 2018 was a special issue entitled *Speculative and constructively critical GIS*, which was guest-edited by Jim E. Thatcher, Luke Bergmann, and David O’Sullivan.

There were 29 book review submissions in 2018, including those for a special collection of reviews for a book by Josh Lepawsky, *Reassembling Rubbish: Worlding Electronic Waste*. This will be published in 2019, and include a response from the author.

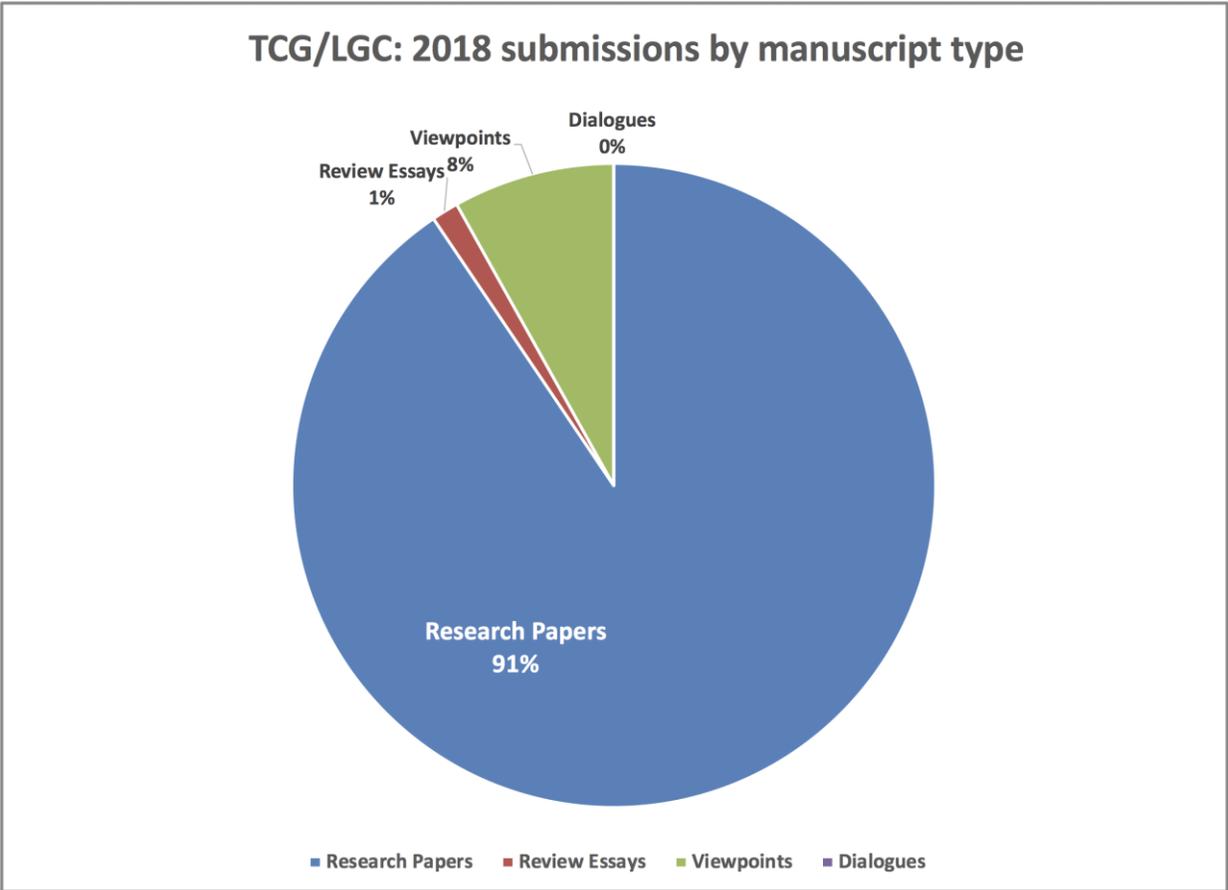


Figure one: Original submissions, by type in 2018. Research papers continue to comprise the bulk of our journal. Viewpoints have, however, gained significant traction.

Dispositions

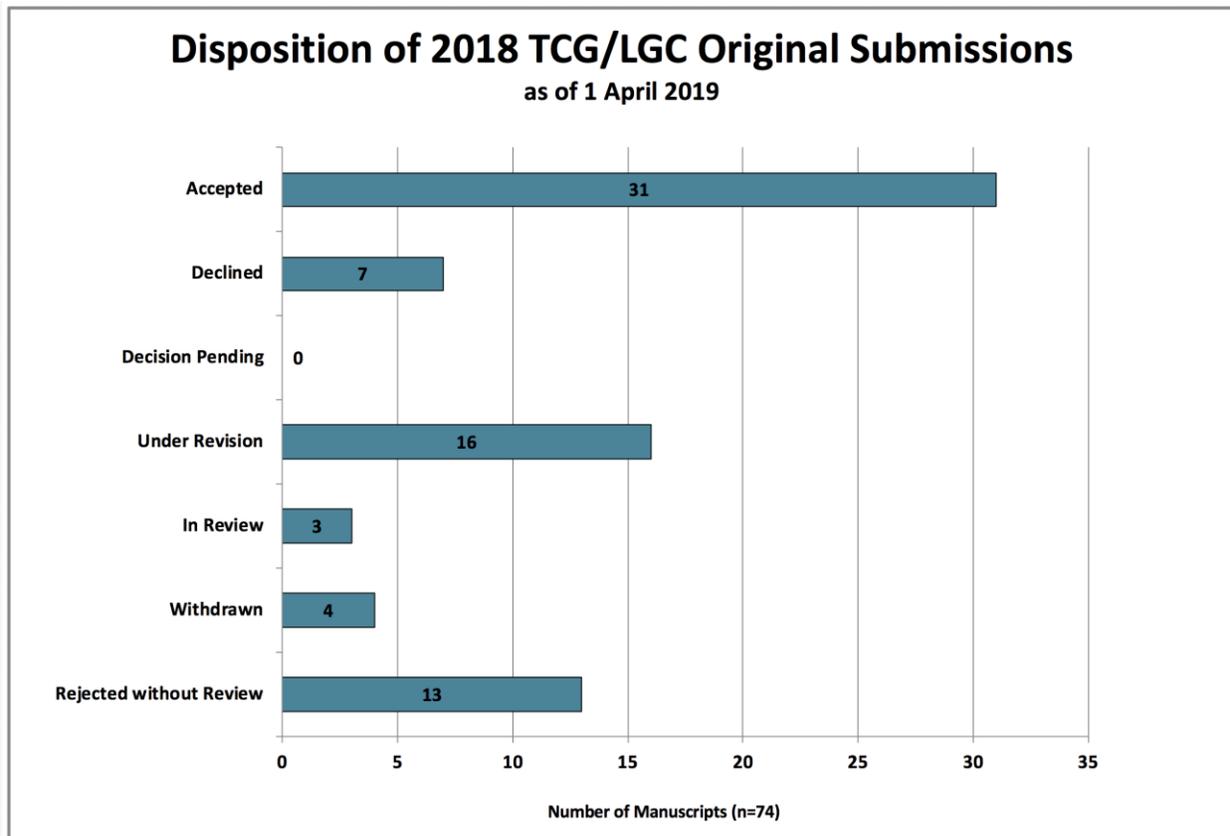


Figure two: Disposition of original manuscripts in 2018. We rejected a high number of manuscripts based on desk reject (13), but did not use our new category of “failure to find reviewers.”

Our acceptance rate was high in 2018—largely a function of the high number of manuscripts submitted in 2018 for special sections that will run in 2019. These papers tend to be vetted prior to submission. Our rate for manuscripts that received a Reject without Review decision increased this year, as we worked to be even more vigilant about selecting only papers appropriately aligned with our journal to send out for review.

Reviewing

While securing reviewers remains a perennial challenge, we made some headway in 2018 by setting a limit of 8 invitations issued for a manuscript after which we dropped the number of required reviewers from 3 to 2. This allowed us to get some manuscripts through review and to decision more quickly. In the past we would try as many as 10–12 reviewers before dropping the requirement to 2 reviewers. However, despite this effort, our time from submission to original decision averaged about the same as in 2017, at 66 days compared to 65 days.

We continue to be faced with the standard obstacles to further reducing this time. There is a small pool of potential reviewers, and these people are generally over-taxed with other commitments. Potential reviewers often fail to decline an invitation, which means we must wait 7 days to designate them as a decline. Further, a number of reviewers are late with reviews and this year we had 4 reviewers who failed to submit a review at all. We are hoping that 2019 may show a slight improvement as we have a number of special sections—we require our special editors to have confirmed reviewers in advance, and while some of these do default, most accept the invitation to review in a timely manner, and submit their review on or close to on time.

When we fail to secure the requisite number of reviewers (or none at all), we have started a new practice of rendering a “reject without review” decision and notifying the author that we were unable to secure reviewers for the paper. We did this once in 2017, after inviting 12 reviewers without a single one accepting. In 2018 we dropped that number to 10 invitations, but did not use this decision.

Bibliometrics and rankings

ISI impact factors and rankings are reported in late June for the preceding year. The TCG-LGC impact factor for 2017 was calculated as a quotient in the following way:

$$\frac{\text{Number of citations in 2017 to TCG-LGC articles published in 2015 and 2016}}{\text{Number of source items published in 2015 and 2016}}$$

Our most recent Impact Factor is for 2017 and is 1.477. This is a considerable improvement over previous years shown in the table below.

ISI Rankings are published by Thomson-Reuters as Journal Citation Reports, a part of the Web of Science.

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
ISI Ranking	27/35	21/35	29/35	31/38	28/39	32/44	35/51	41/62	67/58	54/73	32/72	33/76	35/76	50/77	55/79
ISI Impact Factor	0.405	0.795	0.429	0.491	0.824	0.596	0.717	0.780	0.426	0.561	1.263	1.172	1.179	0.878	0.896

Table two: Journal Citation Reports Rankings and Impact Factors from 2002 to 2016.

We are keenly aware of the rising importance of impact factors. We wait with anticipation for the impact factor to be released every June. Moreover, we work very hard to attract “citable” papers by “star” authors while also working to fulfill our mission to Canadian Geographers in general.

Academic Citations

Academic citations remain the most important metric attributed to papers – as they are the basis for assessment of impact factor. In 2018, the top-cited papers include the famous Butler paper on tourism cycles as well as Rebecca Lave’s radical paper that introduces critical physical geography. This year, a several papers related to working with indigenous peoples were well-cited.

Author Name	Article Title	Publication Year	Times Cited in 2018
Butler, RW	The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution—implications for management of resources	1980	117
Mieczkowski, Z	The tourism climactic index—a method of evaluating world climates for tourism	1985	28
De Leeuw, S	Participatory and community-based research, Indigenous geographies, and the spaces of friendship: A critical engagement	2012	18
Castleden, H	I spent the first year drinking tea: Exploring Canadian university researchers' perspectives on community-based participatory research involving Indigenous peoples	2012	16
Koster, R	Moving from research ON, to research WITH and FOR Indigenous communities: A critical reflection on community-based participatory research	2012	14
Schuurman, N	Measuring potential spatial access to primary health care physicians using a modified gravity model	2010	12
Hicken, EJ	Vegetation and river channel dynamics	1984	11
Lave, R	Intervention: Critical physical geography	2014	11
Andresen, MA	A spatial analysis of crime in Vancouver, British Columbia: a synthesis of social disorganization and routine activity theory	2006	11
Leszczynski, A	Feminist geographies of new spatial media	2015	11

Table three: Top cited papers in 2018. Some of these papers were published up to 38 years ago but continue to receive citations.

A listing of our top cited papers over the past five years is found in Table four. As in past years, a wide range of topics characterize our top cited papers and speak to the importance of a broad disciplinary tent as represented by the journal.

First Author	Article Title	Publication Year	Times Cited Last 5YR
Butler, RW	The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution—implications for management of resources	1980	576
Mieczkowski, Z	The tourism climactic index—a method of evaluating world climates for tourism	1985	107
Lave, R	Intervention: Critical physical geography	2014	62
Castleden, H	I spent the first year drinking tea: Exploring Canadian university researchers' perspectives on community-based participatory research involving Indigenous peoples	2012	61
Hyndman, J	Towards a feminist geopolitics	2001	61
Hicken, EJ	Vegetation and river channel dynamics	1984	53
De Leeuw, S	Participatory and community-based research, Indigenous geographies, and the spaces of friendship: A critical engagement	2012	52
Koster, R	Moving from research ON, to research WITH and FOR Indigenous communities: A critical reflection on community-based participatory research	2012	51
Lepawsky, J	Mapping international flows of electronic waste	2005	49
Schuurman, N	Measuring potential spatial access to primary health care physicians using a modified gravity model	2010	46

Table four: Most cited papers over the past five years. It is hard to discern clear thematic pattern though tourism papers are well represented. It is clear that *The Canadian Geographer* continues to represent diverse areas of the discipline.

Given the heterogeneity of the top cited papers in 2018 and over the past five years, we have requested from Wiley the top cited papers of all time. These appear in Table five below and reinforce the important role that TCG plays in showcasing scholarship from across the discipline.

First Author	Article Title	Publication Year	Times Cited to Date
Butler, RW	The concept of a tourist area cycle of evolution—implications for management of resources	1980	1467
Mieczkowski, Z	The tourism climactic index—a method of evaluating world climates for tourism	1985	193
Hicken, EJ	Vegetation and river channel dynamics	1984	183
Hyndman, J	Towards a feminist geopolitics	2001	146
Dyke, AS	Drumlin Fields, Dispersal Trains, and Ice Streams in Arctic Canada	1988	125
Randall, JE	Communities on the edge: An economic geography of resource-dependent communities in Canada	1996	115
Walks, RA	Ghettos in Canada's cities? Racial segregation, ethnic enclaves and poverty concentration in Canadian urban areas	2006	98
Dyck, I	Feminist geography, the 'everyday', and local-global relations: hidden spaces of place-making	2005	93
Hanlon, N	The greying of resource communities in northern British Columbia: implications for health care delivery in already-underserved communities	2005	92
Slater, T	Municipally managed gentrification in South Parkdale, Toronto	2004	80

Table five: Top cited TCG papers of all time. The pattern of our top cited papers not following a pattern persists – though a cross section of Geography is represented.

Institutional Subscriptions and access to TCG-LGC worldwide

TCG-LGC articles continue to be downloaded around the world – as illustrated in Figure three. Wiley is largely responsible for our impressive download rates as they market the journal through social media as well as email campaigns and through their international consortiums of journals that are sold to libraries.

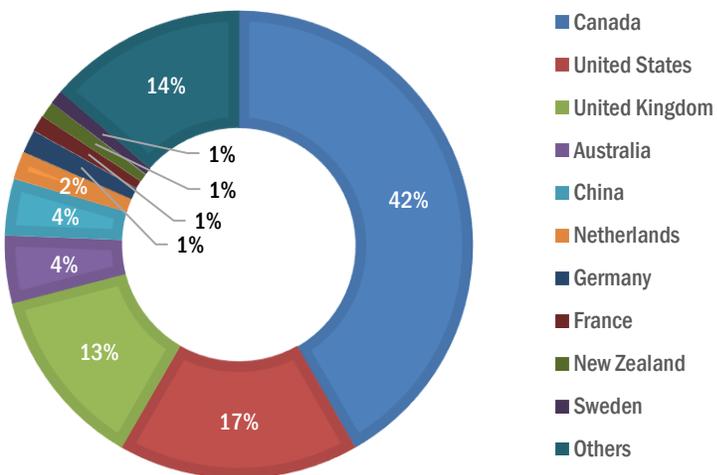


Figure three: Top ten countries that download papers from our journal.

Our goal is to ensure that TCG is an international journal. Figure four confirms that we do invite papers from a range of countries. However, at present, we primarily serve Canadian and US authors.

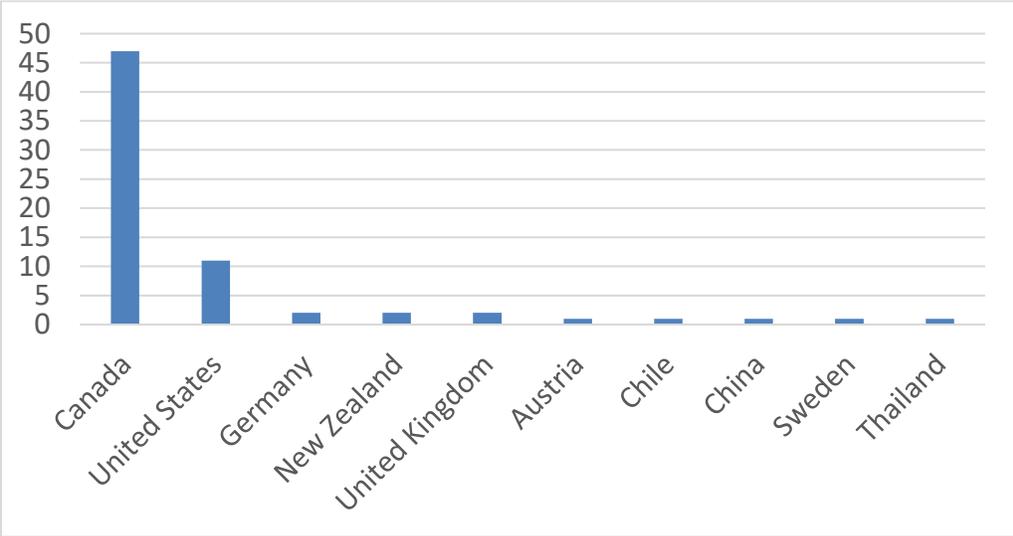


Figure four: Author origin for 2018 submissions.

Final word

TCG-LGC remains in a strong position in terms of metrics, marketing, and readership. We continue to attract readers, citations, and downloads. This is comforting given the immense changes facing the academic publish industry including Open Access journals and a proliferation of publishing choices. Our aim is to hold this course in 2019 and beyond.

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