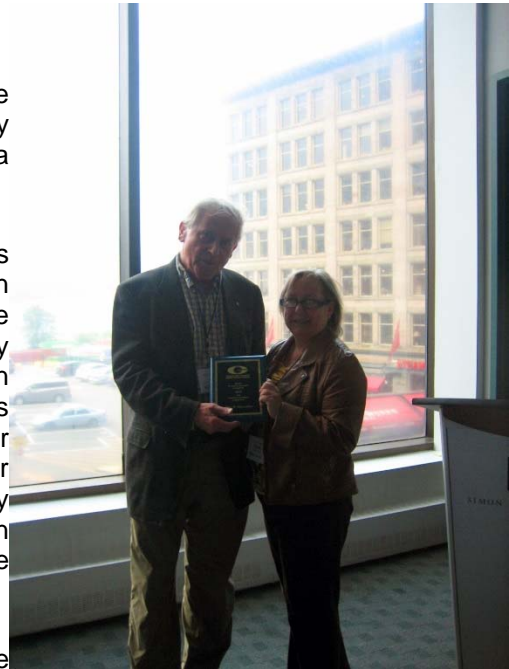


## **CAG Award for Scholarly Distinction Dr Olav Slaymaker**

“In 1992, one of my first Ph.D. Students was the co-winner of the CAG Award for Scholarly Distinction: Ming-ko (Hok) Woo. My winning this same award in 2015 is 23 years later. Is this a record?” – Olav Slaymaker

In this award, the CAG draws attention not to Olav Slaymaker's superb contribution to the Association itself – which has been acknowledged before – but instead to his distinctive lifetime contributions to research and scholarship in physical geography in general, and to geomorphology, notably mountain geomorphology, in particular. Among past international awards he has won the David Linton Award of the British Society for Geomorphology (2003), effectively the premier global award for geomorphological research; was appointed as an honorary lifetime member of the Japanese Geomorphological Union (2005); and was recipient of an honorary doctorate from the Univ. of Wales (2007).



In a sense trumping all of the above was Olav's citation in the Governor General's New Year Honours this year as an inductee as a Member of the Order of Canada. The brief version of the OC citation reads, “For advancing the field of geology, notably through his research on landscape evolution.” While we may raise our eyebrows at the specification of discipline, we celebrate the recognition and honouring of Olav's scholarship.

Professor Slaymaker's scholarly contributions of over 20 (co-) edited monographs and 160 refereed papers reflect three distinct styles of work. First, he has pursued original field research for 40 years on sediment yield and slope stability in the Canadian cordillera, research accomplished and published with his students. A second and more exceptional style in physical geography is the production of a series of papers and books summarising trends in sedimentation, land quality and environmental change in mountain regions. This stream of work reveals Olav's unique contribution to scholarship that defines and publicises a gathering global crisis arising from the way that humans use and abuse the environment in a manner far more encompassing than climate change alone. Olav's career-long commitment to this field defines him as one of its principal pioneers.

The third style is a development of the second. He has a distinguished record as editor of influential monographs to which he has invited contributions from students and colleagues on major environmental and geomorphological themes. The apogee to date of this stream of work is his co-edited volume, *Geomorphology and Global Environmental Change* (2009), published by Cambridge University Press. But it is far from his last word. Under preparation is a two-volume edited set on *The Geomorphology of Canada*, sponsored as part of a global series by the International Association of Geomorphologists.

Finally we draw attention to Olav's enduring and trend-setting work presenting the human uses of the environment, and its consequent perils, with special reference to alpine and other cold environments. It should be emphasised that in such bold attempts to revalue an integrated physical geography that has deep connections to human geography, he has too often been a lone voice in a generation when almost all other physical geographers have withdrawn to specific process studies within defined sub-disciplines. Olav Slaymaker is, in consequence, one of the few physical geographers who can comment authoritatively on the trajectory of the whole environment. For each of these important contributions, we honour him as recipient of the CAG's 2015 Award for Scholarly Distinction in Geography.