



ISISA

Newsletter

Volume 10, Number 1, August 2012

Published by the International Small Islands Studies Association

EDITORIAL

This is the first newsletter that I am editing for ISISA. The plan is to have two issues of the ISISA Newsletter annually (June and December). The main aim of this newsletter is to keep participants connected and 'in the loop' of what is going on, in between the ISISA biennial conferences. This newsletter is what you make it, so please keep the contributions coming. Photos, articles, forthcoming publications, upcoming conferences, and news on 'research in progress' are more than welcome. **Contributions for the December 2012 issue are to reach me at abaldacchino59@gmail.com by not later than NOVEMBER 15, 2012.** Read and Enjoy. Suggestions for improvement are also appreciated.

I want to thank Denbeigh Armstrong, who as the ISISA editor before me, passed on information and handy tips on how to go about putting this newsletter together.

Anna Baldacchino
Newsletter Editor

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of their respective authors and are not necessarily endorsed by ISISA.

The "Islands of the World" XII Conference Evaluation Summary

Delegates of the 'Islands of the World XII' Conference, held at the H. Laverty Stoutt Community College (HLSCC), Paraquita Bay Campus, Tortola, British Virgin Islands, over May 29 – June 1, 2012, were given an opportunity on the final day of the conference to express their views about various aspects regarding the organization of this conference. This brief report provides a summary of the data obtained through the 50 completed evaluation forms that were returned to the organizers for analysis.

Responses to Evaluation Questions

Value of program segments – A large number of delegates commented that they found the keynote speakers' presentations to be both interesting and enjoyable. Most delegates also found the opportunities of networking, with well-known island scholars, and of recognizing and discussing similar challenges of islands, to be of significant value.

Delegates' comments to possible improvements – The delegates considered the conference to have many sessions of value, but attendance and participation was constrained as similar areas of interest were often scheduled in concurrent sessions. Suggestions were made for more attention to be given to parallel and less to plenary sessions. Suggestions were also made in support of a session chair protocol handout, and/or web-page

description defining the expectations and roles of chairs; such would alleviate or eliminate some timing issues within sessions.

Overall suggestions on improvements - This question received a large vote of support for the efforts made by Dana Lewis-Ambrose and her capable colleagues at HLSCC. The question also raised the issue that presenters could benefit from guidelines which would provide a deeper topic focus and improved presentation structure. A number of delegates expressed a wish for a conference attendee list including contact information (email addresses) to promote further networking opportunities.

Least valued program segments – The majority of the delegates responded to this question by stating that all sessions were felt to be of value. Delegates noted however that discussions on financial services and economic development segments lacked depth. This could be due to the complexity of the subject and time constraints

Rating different aspects of the conference - Delegates assigned top values (97%) to the helpfulness and friendliness of Student Ambassadors and the Organization Committee Members. Slightly lower yet similarly impressive values (91-96%) were given to the conference registration process, conference site facilities, conference tours and activities, bus services, and overall organization of the conference. Lower but still very high values (86%-90%) were given for the preparedness of presenters, conference topics and content of concurrent sessions. The lowest value aspects of the conference (85% and less) have been assigned to poster sessions and session timing issues.

The information provided through the rating of the conference aspects does not differentiate between program schedule issues and session start times associated with unexpected and unavoidable delays, as against those resulting from time management problems of session chairs and presenters.

Dana Lewis-Ambrose and her team deserve our warmest congratulations for an overwhelming successful conference. Her efforts, and those of all the members of her team throughout the conference, received repeated comments of appreciation in the evaluation exercise.

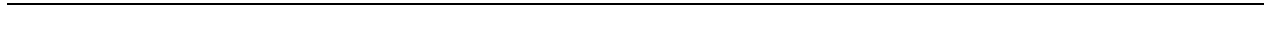
Cheryl Carmichael - Graduate Student, MA (Island Studies), University of Prince Edward Island, Canada Participant and Presenter



Delegates networking during lunch



H.Lavity Stouitt Community College, BVI



Such questions were discussed at the 12th Islands of the World conference, in May 2012, on the

Organisers of the conference ensured that we did not remain roped to the presentation rooms. After the

Back on Tortola, we wandered through the Governor's heritage house to the beats of steel drums. A Cultural Showcase closed the conference, featuring local delicacies, dancers, and crafts. It sounds like paradise! It was often claimed to be. But no location can be perfect, not even in the Caribbean. BVI, and the other islands represented, share challenges with many Norwegian islands: poorer services, higher cost of living, marginalisation by mainlanders, and outmigration. To live on an island, you must accept the difficulties with all the advantages.

Dr. Ilan Kelman is a Senior Research Fellow at the Center for International Climate and Environmental Research - (CICERO) Oslo, Norway.



Beach near Bitter End, British Virgin Islands

Photo: Ilan Kelman



Island Studies Journal (ISSN: 1715-2593) was set up in 2006 as a freely downloadable, peer reviewed, scholarly and inter-disciplinary journal dedicated to the study of islands and island life.

ISJ is institutionally housed at the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada: www.islandstudies.com

ISJ is now the official journal of ISISA, initially for a trial period of 2 years.

Manuscripts to be considered for publication welcome at: isj@upei.ca

Website: www.islandstudies.ca/journal

“We live on a placid island of ignorance in the midst of black seas of infinity, and it was not meant that we should voyage far.”

H.P. Lovecraft

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS BY ISISA MEMBERS

THE JUMBIES' PLAYING GROUND

Old World Influences on Afro-Creole Masquerades in the Eastern Caribbean

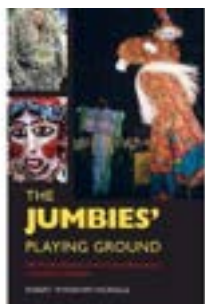
ROBERT WYNDHAM NICHOLLS

FOREWORD BY JOHN NUNLEY

During the masquerades common during carnival time, jumbies (ghosts or ancestral spirits) are set free to roam the streets of Caribbean nations, turning the world topsy-turvy. Modern carnivals, which evolved from earlier ritual celebrations featuring disguised performers, are important cultural and economic events throughout the Caribbean and are a direct link to a multilayered history.

This work explores the evolutionary connections in function, garb, and behaviour between Afro-Creole masquerades and precursors from West Africa, the British Isles, and Western Europe. Robert Wyndham Nicholls utilizes a concept of play derived from Africa to describe a range of lighthearted and ritualistic activities. Along with Old World seeds, he studies the evolution of Afro-Creole prototypes that emerged in the Eastern Caribbean—bush masquerades, stilt dancers, animal disguises, she-males, female masquerades, and carnival clowns.

Masquerades enact social, political, and spiritual roles within recurring festivals, initiations, wakes, skimmingtons, and weddings. The author explores performance in terms of abstraction in costume-disguise and the aesthetics of music, songs, drum rhythms, dance, and licentiousness. He reveals masquerades as transformative agent, ancestral endorser, behaviour manager, informal educator, and luck conferrer.



Robert Wyndham Nicholls, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, is a professor in the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences of the University of the Virgin Islands. He is the author of numerous articles in journals such as *African*

Arts, *the Black Perspective in Music, Dance, Folklore*, *Folklore Forum*, and *International Journal of African Dance*.

NOVEMBER, 304 pages (approx.), 6 x 9 inches, 30 b&w photographs (approx.), 65 color photographs (approx.), 3 maps, foreword, appendices, bibliography, index
Printed casebinding \$55.00 978-1-61703-611-8
Ebook \$55.00 978-1-61703-612-5
Folklore Studies in a Multicultural World

A TASTE OF ISLANDS

"This book is a journey to some of the world's many and diverse islands, captured in dishes, and between covers."

Grant McCall, President, International Small Islands Studies Association

Anna and Godfrey Baldacchino are co-editing a publication titled, *"A Taste of Islands: 60 Recipes & Stories from our World of Islands"*. This will be published late in 2012 by Island Studies Press, part of the Institute of Island Studies at the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada's smallest and only full island province.

The book is taking shape as a 260-page extravaganza of island dishes: the editors are collecting 60 "chapters" from all over the world, each showcasing a traditional, local island dish—with ingredients, recipe and method of preparation; followed by a short essay describing the dish's history, origins and transformations; and concluding with a list of further reading; just a succinct but captivating 2,000 words. Each article will be accompanied by one full-colour photo of the prepared dish. The editors invite readers to get a taste of each of the 60 islands in the book through their dishes.

The International Small Islands Studies Association, which held its 12th Biennial Conference from 29 May-1 June May, 2012 in the Virgin Islands, has endorsed this publication. It is a perfect fit as, just like the book, ISISA celebrates the diversity and resilience of island people and cultures throughout the world.

Pre-ordering a copy of the book and any enquires can be addressed to Anna Baldacchino: abaldacchino59@gmail.com.

Proposed artwork for book cover by Jean-Yves Vigneau



Mosquitoes and Lemurs: Branson's Island Sustainability?

Ilan Kelman

Richard Branson owns a lot—including Mosquito Island within the British Virgin Islands, a U.K. Overseas Territory in the Caribbean. With his island, Branson is doing something different: he is building a luxury eco-tourism resort.

Extensive effort is aiming to make it environmentally friendly. Baseline studies established eco-zones and important species. Geological and forestry surveys are used to ensure that roads do not scar the landscape. Monitoring and data collection will continue after construction.

The buildings use passive cooling, natural ventilation, rainwater collection, energy reduction approaches, and a host of other sustainable architectural practices. All while incorporating hurricane resistance measures.



It is exciting to see sustainability principles being implemented in practice. The learning process is particularly important, in terms of gleaning feedback from the island and infrastructure while the resort functions.

More thoughtful and critiquing analysis would be helpful to ensure that we learn as much as feasible. For example, Branson wants to import lemurs, a mammal that has no connection at all with the island. He has already brought some animals to a nearby island.

Furthermore, consider the deeper sustainability questions which are rarely asked.

How does privatising an island contribute to the entire country and peoples of the British Virgin Islands? Are local, sustainable livelihoods generated by hideaways for the rich, irrespective of how environmentally friendly the resorts are? What ethics emerge through supporting small island countries with profits made from environmentally wasteful industries, such as aviation?

Despite the complexity of the answers (and the questions), Branson is charging ahead. That is not necessarily to be criticised. Nor should it be venerated.

Instead, we must learn what we can and always seek to do better. Sustainability is a never-ending process—especially of learning and teaching.

“An island to someone who has never left it is the world. An island to someone who has never seen it does not exist.”

Wayne Johnston

Research in Progress

Roy Smith will be on research leave from October 2012 and will be mainly based at University of the South Pacific in Fiji through to late December. He is also planning to visit Tuvalu to conduct interviews on attitudes towards the threat of sea-level rise and the prospect of mass migration. This will be linked to interviews with Tuvaluan diaspora living in Auckland, New Zealand. He will also seek to gain access to Australian and New Zealand government officials to interview them regarding this potential relocation and what political status Tuvalu might be able to maintain if it were to lose its resident population. In particular this will be in relation to its current exclusive economic zone and the income generated from this.

Research Network on sea level rise and its impact for small islands – invitation to participate

Beate M.W. Ratter, KlimaCampus, Hamburg, Germany

The prediction of a catastrophic sea level rise places the problem of climate change at a crisis point especially for low-lying islands. And especially the low lying coralline, flat island states which are under threat of an increased sea level have managed to put their issue on the international political agenda and in the media worldwide. Along with the polar bear, exotic small island states – pictured in photos of white sandy beaches, turquoise sea and an inclined palm tree – seem to be most threatened by sea level rise. The growing international awareness and compassion about vulnerable small homelands makes small islands a crucial topic in socio-economic, cultural and political studies about the impact of climate change – both in analysing the actual ongoing processes and challenges as well as in analysing the importance and symbolism of threatened exotic “gardens of Eden”.

The U.N. network of climate scientists projects that seas on a global level, expanding from heat and from the runoff of melting land ice, may rise by up to 1.94 feet (0.59 meters) by 2100, swamping much of the scarce land of coral atolls. But the islands may become uninhabitable long before waves wash over them and because warming is expected to produce more threatening storms. Rising sea level leads to increased beach erosion, reduced space for locational redistribution or evasion, intrusion of saline sea water in the fresh water reservoirs and on agricultural land, etc. Long-term consequences for the disappearing nations include also the question: do nations without territory still exist? And what happens to the fishing rights or to the revenues from seabed minerals that geologists have been exploring in recent years?

A global perspective on that issue, taking small islands as generally under threat, does not reflect the regional differences which have to be taken under consideration. And major natural hazards and threats can not only be blamed on the emission of greenhouse gases. Many of the existing threats are due to interferences in the local environment. In this context an assignment of obligation to the so called developed world without changing local behaviour could cause catastrophic events. Small islands are not only victims but also agents of environmental crisis events.

In the context of the research cluster “Integrated Climate System Analysis and Prediction” CLISAP at the University of Hamburg, Germany, we intend to establish an international research network on sea level rise impact on small islands.

We invite scholars of different disciplines and from different parts of the world to participate and contribute to the discourse on regional impacts of sea level rise, specific regional differences in awareness and culturally framed behaviour, locational or regional mitigation and adaptation measures, and institutional or political strategies to deal with these problems.

Those who are interested in this network and discussions on this topic are welcome to send their contact details to:

ratter@geowiss.uni-hamburg.de

Prof. Dr. Beate M.W. Ratter
Institute of Geography, University of Hamburg, Bundesstrasse 55,
20146 Hamburg
Germany
<http://www.klimacampus.de>

Marta Duarte and Ricardo Ventura were both participants in the ‘Islands of the World’ XII Conference in Tortola, BVI. They wanted to share some of their photos of the unforgettable night at the Governor’s house.



The amazing Sky Dancers



Playing on steel drums



A talented group of musicians



Delicious food

Daniela Rocco Minerbi was another presenter at the ISISA conference. While in Tortola, she also managed to capture some of the landscape and culture through her paintings. She graciously shared these two with us.



Sky Dancers



Virgin Gorda Beach, BVI



Photo by Dr Nikolaos
Lymberopoulos

Interesting how certain objects achieve iconic status, such as the UK Post Office red telephone boxes and post boxes. **Roy Smith** was in Antigua on his way back to the UK just after the ISISA conference in Tortola when he came across this telephone box. This example of the telephone booth can be quite easily explained by the British colonial legacy. However, Roy Smith showed this photo to a Russian student in the UK, and she mentioned that there is a bar in Moscow that has a similar telephone box with no explanation at all as to why it is there. **Have other island hoppers come across objects that seem out of place? We would like to hear all about it if you have, and please do include photos as well.**

Mapping Landscape Values Using Participatory GIS for Community-Based Planning on PEI.

*Jackie M. Bourgeois, BSc (Agr), MA (Island Studies) candidate,
University of Prince Edward Island, Canada*

Have you ever wondered how people value their space, or whether they value the same places as you in the very same ways? This is something that I have become very interested in while pursuing my Master of Arts (Island Studies) degree and thus is the focus of my studies here at the University of Prince Edward Island. Working with the UPEI Institute of Island Studies, I am interested in mapping how people value their areas from a social and cultural perspective and in effect, want to help people and communities discover their places in unique and different ways. My research focuses on testing an online method to ‘values mapping’ and whether this might be an effective tool to support communities in their decision-making processes with regards to development, conservation, and future climate and environmental change. In a world of globalization, increased development and environmental degradation, it is especially critical to know the social and cultural significance of places on the smaller islands of the world where land is often limited and is at the heart of several competing issues – such as conservation, development, ecotourism, or agriculture. Land-use decisions are usually based on agricultural productivity, potential for development or ecological importance; pure aesthetics are rarely, if ever, considered. With climate change already having detrimental effects on PEI’s land and shores, there is a vital need to address this through long-term planning.

As a native Prince Edward Islander and former climate change coordinator for the Nunavut Government, I recognize the importance of valuing communities’ input and perspectives into effective policy and program development, especially with respect to issues that impact significantly on their quality of life. Climate change in particular is expected to have major implications for Prince Edward Islanders; the provincial government is currently revamping land-use policy; however, little is known about how Islanders aesthetically, or otherwise, value their land. Hence my interest in pursuing research that would connect, meaningfully, local land-use values and concerns with government policy and future program development.

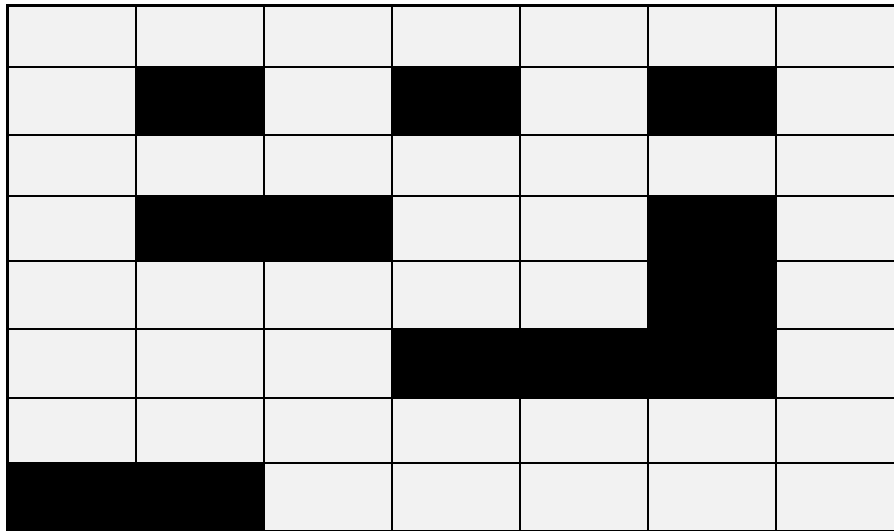
Values mapping is a process whereby people can identify – through using designated ‘value dots’ – significant areas on a map which are important to them for a variety of different reasons, such as: *Aesthetic, Economic, Recreation, Life Sustaining, Learning, Spiritual, Existence/Intrinsic, Historic, Future, Therapeutic, Cultural, Wilderness*, or just *Special Places*. Variations of the values mapping approach have been tested in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and PEI in Canada. My goal is to build on this work in the context of testing and/or refining the effectiveness of the values mapping tool in strengthening community resiliency to climate change impacts, as well as to provide information to government(s) in its creation of new land-use policy.

Write to me for further information at: arctic.angel.37@gmail.com

ISLAND CROSSWORD

Here is an Islands Crossword, designed by Godfrey Baldacchino. All the clues are listed below, but in no particular order. Fit ALL the answers to the clues on the 7x8 grid provided.

Submissions to be sent to the newsletter editor by September 30, 2012. Late entries will not be considered. A winner will be drawn by lot from any successful entries received, and awarded a book prize.



1. Arrow is no Miss in *Treasure Island*
2. The Second.
3. The one in Tortola is at Pasea, near Davis Funeral Home.
4. Teacher, union leader, prime minister; ousted in 1979.
5. As an immigrant to the US in 1928, she was detained on Angel Island.
6. George visited this lesser known Rapa in 1791.
7. Chant; or almost half an island state.
8. Scholar of marine terraces in Japan.
9. Coined island studies neologism in 1982.
10. Island state, connected by causeway to mainland.
11. Largest island of an 18-island territory in the North Atlantic.
12. Former British Caribbean colony, but twice abandoned.
13. Observer of brush warbler on Aldabra atoll.
14. Significant island lobby.
15. 2nd largest city on a large, west coast island.
16. With Nosy, island dive site near Anakao.
17. Venue of last ISISA Conference.

Upcoming Island Studies Conferences

*Island Studies:
West Coast Canada & Beyond:
By, For, About Islanders and Islands*
Co-organized by:
Athabasca University,
Thompson Rivers University and
Vancouver Island University
in association with ISISA –
May 10-12, 2013

**An opportunity to celebrate 25
years of ISISA, and more...**

islandstudiesconference2013.org

*Islands of the World
XIII Conference, 2014
will be taking place at the
Highlands College
University Centre, Jersey,
Channel Islands, British
Isles.*

27 – 30 May, 2014

For additional information about the development of plans for the **13th biennial Islands of World Conference in JERSEY**, in 2014, check the permanent ISISA web site, maintained by Maui College of the University of Hawaii [USA] at <http://isisa.maui.hawaii.edu/>, and the Highland College University Centre website: <http://www.highlands.ac.uk/university-centre/isisa-islands-of-the-world-xiii-conference/>

- **IGC 2012 Congress in Cologne.** The IGC is the quadrennial meeting of the International Geographical Union (IGU). The congress combines the traditional meetings of the IGC Commissions with a wide range of sessions addressing the following four key topics:

- Global Change and Globalisation
- Society and Environment
- Risks and Conflicts
- Urbanisation and Demographic Change

Congress dates: 26 – 30 August, 2012. More details at http://igu-islands.giee.ntnu.edu.tw/dispPageBox/igu_Cp.aspx?ddsPageID=IGUENCFR&dbid=3111114810

- **2nd International Conference on Island Sustainability.** 17-19 September, 2012 in Brac, Croatia. Visit <http://www.wessex.ac.uk/12-conferences/islands-2012.html> for more details.

- The 15th Annual ‘Islands In Between’ Conference, celebrating the cultures of Caribbean islands, will be hosted Nov. 8-10, 2012, at the University of the Virgin Islands on St. Thomas. The conference is being organized by the University of Puerto Rico - Río Piedras, the University of the West Indies at Cave Hill, Barbados, the University of the Virgin Islands and the Per Ankh Institute of the Virgin Islands. For more details go to:
<http://humanidades.uprrp.edu/ingles/students/resources/islandsinbetween.htm>
- **Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium** to be held 7-9 April 2013 in Cooperstown, NY, USA. More details from: <http://www.esf.edu/nerr/>
- **3rd Island Dynamics Conference – Islands of Culture and Practice**
14–18 May 2013, Gazimağusa (Famagusta), North Cyprus

At the *3rd Island Dynamics Conference*, representatives from academia, government, business, and the third sector will explore island issues, past and present, worldwide. Although the conference will cover talks on all aspects of maritime and island studies, this year’s conference theme is **islands of culture and practice**.

Islands are often home to unique **artistic, social, economic, and political traditions**. They both preserve traditions that have been lost on the mainland and function as meeting places for traditions, the mingling of which result in new traditional forms. We can even speak of **archipelagos** of culture and practice, where traditions flourish in dispersed geographical areas. How do traditions develop in such circumstances, and what can island and mainland communities tell us about one another?

Visit <http://www.islanddynamics.org/3idc.html> for more details.

***For more island news and
events visit the Global Islands
Network***

<http://www.globalislands.net/>

A copy of this Newsletter is being sent to registered members of ISISA and also those listed on the Yahoo Group. However, future Newsletters may be restricted to members only. If you are not an ISISA member and would like to join, you can do so online on the ISISA website:

<http://isisa.maui.hawaii.edu/?s=join>