



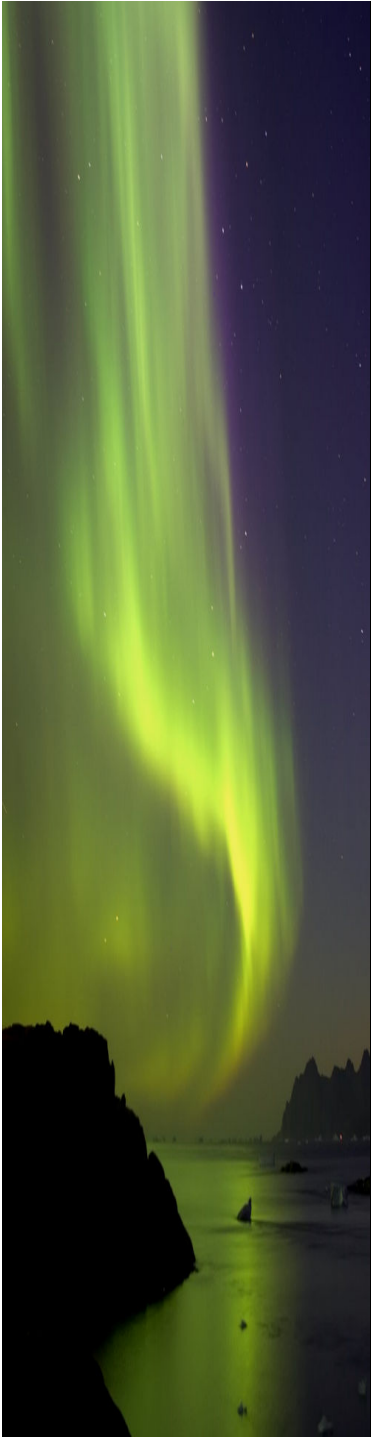
Warm welcome in the North?
Community capacity and immigrant
integration in British Columbia's
northern regions

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Outline

- Purpose for the study
- Field Work Summer 2007
- Social implications of regionalization
- Discussion & future research



Purpose for the study

Immigrant and Refugee:

- Settlement process
- Social & economic integration
- Retention

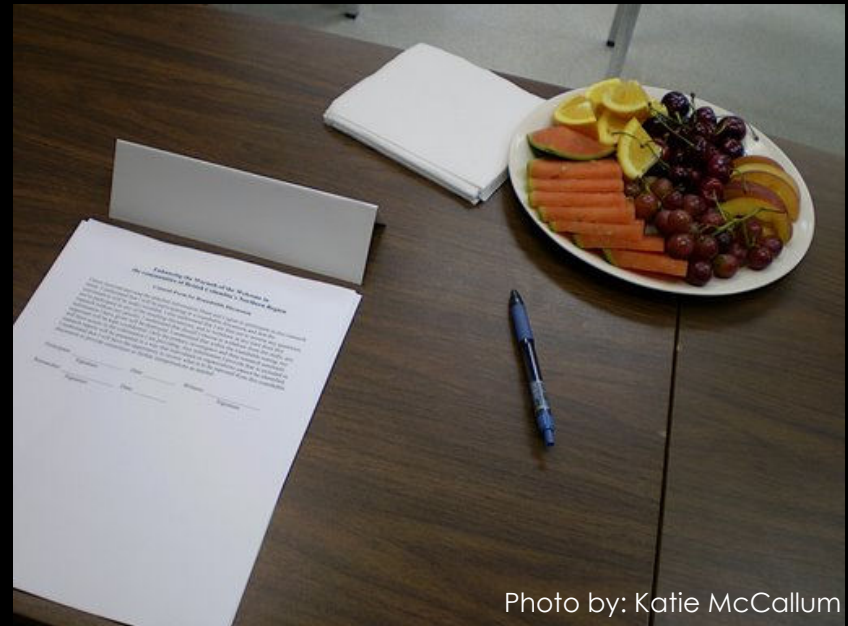
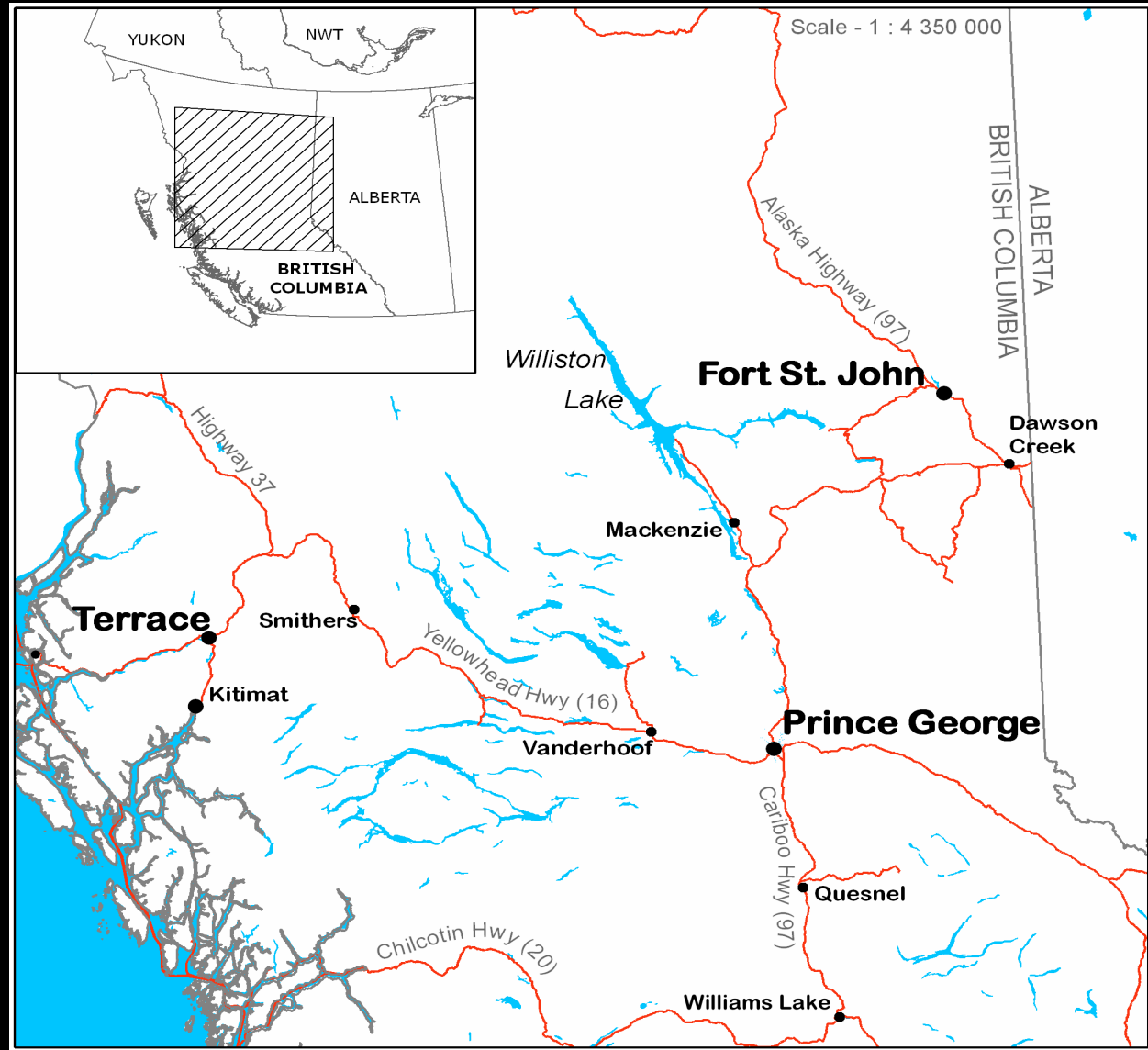
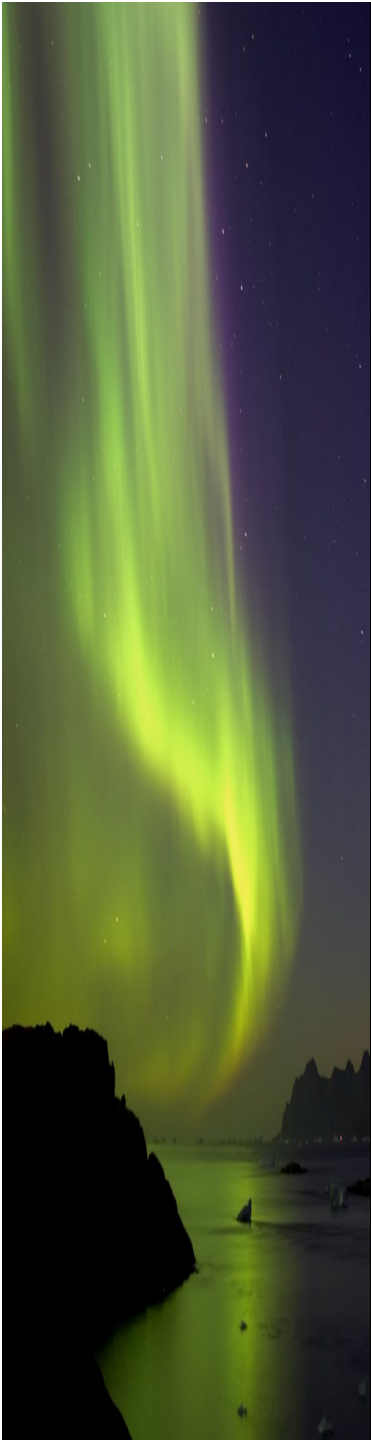


Photo by: Katie McCallum

Field Work Summer 2007



Map by: Kyle Kusch





Field Work Summer 2007

- Exploratory
- Roundtable ($n=3$)
Municipal governments, business
community, policy makers
- Interviews ($n=25$)
Service provider community

Field Work Summer 2007 Prince George



“[It is] important to provide a package to newcomers...it is also important to provide a package to employers about what Prince George provides to newcomers and cultural sensitive issues. Right now there is a big disconnect between the two groups.”

Field Work Summer 2007 Fort St. John

"The economy is booming."

*"There are more jobs than workers,
so it is easy to find work."*



Photo by: Katie McCallum



Photo by: Katie McCallum

Field Work Summer 2007 Terrace



Photo by: Katie McCallum

"The town is in transition with the sawmill closure...On the other hand the next 5 years in Terrace will be good with an active economy."



Photo by: Katie McCallum



Field Work Summer 2007

- Study area of northern BC
- Growing concern of intense concentration of immigrants
- Smaller centre benefits
- Economic Focus



Understanding welcoming and integration

- *Debating the meaning of welcoming community and integration*

“...in reality the assessment [of successful integration] is often based on a narrow understanding and a rigid expectation that treats integration solely in terms of the degree to which immigrants converge to the average performance of native-born Canadians and their normative and behavioural standards (Peter Li, 2003 316)”



Research question

What do you think are the elements of a welcoming community? What does successful immigrant integration mean to you?



'Welcoming community' & 'integration'

"I think that Fort St. John is still somewhat of redneck community and there are still some issues – racism type issues. So there is a need for diversity training..." (FSJ 17).

"In small towns that's hard, you know, because people have their little tight circles that they deal in. You've got to be open. You've got to be in a mindset that says different isn't bad" (Terrace 7).



Social & economic integration

“...they want to stay here. They have a job, [and] can feed their family, they see a future for their family here. They are successfully employed in meaningful employment. [Pause] And they’re part of the community. Not just their community, but the community.” (Prince George 1)

- Facilitating social integration
- Working “off the edge of the desk”
- Funding issues



Social & economic integration

- Push for immigrant *attraction* for economic betterment
- Critical to provide settlement services
- Concern with immigrant policies directed at attracting immigrant workers

Social & economic integration

- Whose responsibility is it to integrate?
- Two way process?
- Individuals, community, country?



Photo by: Katie McCallum



Social & economic integration

Respondents qualified integration to mean:

- Newcomers are happy, healthy
- English speaking
- Unsegregated
- Working at a job that matches their skills

*“... please be working because I don't want to be paying taxes to support you on social assistance, okay? Call that rude or whatever, but it's reality. I don't want people from other countries moving here so they can suck off our government to survive. That's not contributing to our society”
(Terrace 9).*



Social & economic integration

- How much diversity is the host society willing to accept?
- Dilemma between concepts of social cohesion and multicultural particularism.

“...are we expecting people to come here and sort of adopt white man’s culture in it’s entirety or is it fine to retain some of the cultural traditions of the place you came from? So, what is integration? It’s the old melting-pot/mosaic thing! [Pause] I guess we do, we do expect anybody moving to the area to be good citizens...” (Terrace 5)



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Thank you!

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