



"Our environment is our future"

RESEARCH COLLOQUIUM SERIES

Dr. Ken Brealey

Associate Dean, College of Arts
Faculty, Department of Geography
University of the Fraser Valley



Friday
Oct. 10, 2014

3:30 - 4:25

Weldwood Theater
7-238

Click to follow us on



MAPPING ABORIGINAL TITLE: THE CASE OF TSILHQOT'IN V. BRITISH COLUMBIA

On July 11 2014, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) ruled that the Tsilhqot'in First Nation in the central interior plateau of British Columbia met the test for a declaration of Aboriginal title over some 1700 square kilometres of its traditional territory. The significance of the decision was not only that it was the first such declaration of Aboriginal title in untreated territories in Canada, but that it upheld the 2007 judgment of the British Columbia Supreme Court in which the trial judge determined that such title could be exercised over extensive tracts of land by a semi-nomadic people. The trial court decision relied heavily on the cartographic representation of Tsilhqot'in land use and occupancy regimes in three separate, but ultimately interrelated, mapping projects. All told, the SCC judgment not only confirmed the 'power of maps' to 'make visible' that which had previously been experienced, known and transmitted across the generations through a qualitatively different cultural perspective, but likely contains lessons for 'best practices' in a decolonizing cartography that can be used to support Indigenous land claims.