

Hello everyone.

I hope you managed to access the transitional/extension material from last week and found something of interest in what was recommended?

One of the key areas of study at AL is **Antarctica**, both from a **Water and Carbon** perspective, **Glaciated landscapes** and from a **Global Commons** point-of-view and so it is an area of study that crosses the boundaries between physical and human geography. And as we pass the Longest Day here in the UK and are in that period of time referred to as Midsummer in the northern hemisphere I thought it might be interesting to consider what is happening in the southern hemisphere on the continent of Antarctica?

You will learn from your studies at A-Level that both **Antarctica** and the **Southern Ocean** below the **Convergence** are very significant components of the High Latitude southern hemisphere ecosystems and have a great influence not only on oceanic circulation, but food chains, atmospheric stability (Ozone Hole) but also they transcend the physical and environmental to the **geopolitical**. Ever since the discovery of the continent just over 200 years ago and the subsequent exploration and exploitation, Antarctica has been a challenging place in many ways. The creation of the Antarctic Treaty in the 1950's was an attempt to add certainty to the situation, as have been the many subsequent treaties and agreements, such as the Madrid Protocol. Those issues identified in the immediacy of the post-war world still hold true today and in some ways are more pressing now than ever - for example, the impact of **climate change**.

The podcast identified below explores some of these issues and pressures in an accessible, discursive style and is very good at raising key questions and having some contemporary university workers discuss options and issues from just a short few years ago.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08gt1j2>



[BBC Radio 3 - Arts & Ideas, Revisit: Antarctica - testing ground for the human species](https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p08gt1j2)

Meredith Hooper, Ben Saunders, Hugh Broughton and Jonathan Bamber discuss the Antarctica of our imaginations and the reality of

the landscape with Rana Mitter and an audience. Show more Two ...

For a slightly different perspective on Antarctica the following programme, hosted by Cerys Matthews (from BBC Radio 6), has the latest version of the Antarctic Midwinter Broadcast aired last June (2019) on BBC World Service. Remember - midwinter for those in Antarctica is June 21st just as we are celebrating the summer equinox here in the northern hemisphere. Most staff at the various national bases do not overwinter, usually there is only a skeleton staff in each base carrying out maintenance and essential repairs. See www.bas.ac.uk for the sorts of jobs people do in Antarctica. It must be a hard time to be there - very cold, dark for months on end and very limited social contact. Obviously in recent years improved communication has improved this side of things, but it must still require considerable stamina.

Life in Antarctica was captured really well a few years ago in a radio comedy called Bird Island, but this is no longer available on catch-up sadly. I had a colleague from one of my post-graduate courses go to work in Antarctica and he often remarked on the 'remoteness' of things - at one point he was working in a geology camp with another scientist and the two of them were 1500 miles from the nearest other people!

So, to the discussion programme:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csz4pn>

Once again I hope that these real-life programmes help to bring home much of the theoretical work you will address over the course and help to contextualise the need for that knowledge that will be gained in class and how it is applied in the 'real world'.

Take care everyone and stay well 😊

Mr Haslam