

Economic Geography Research Group (EGRG) Chair's Annual Report, January 2009

Current Committee

Chair and Webpage Officer Neil Coe (University of Manchester, 2006-2009)
Secretary Al James (Queen Mary, University of London, 2008-2011)
Treasurer Martin Hess (University of Manchester, 2007-2010)

Joint Book Review

and Working Paper Editors James Faulconbridge (University of Lancaster) and John Harrison (University of Loughborough) (2006-2009)

Annual Events Officers Sarah Hall (University of Nottingham) and Laura James (University of Birmingham) (2008-2011)

Many thanks to Mia Gray, who stood down in September 2008, for her service as EGRG Secretary. We welcome Al James (Secretary) to the committee, along with two new annual events officers (Sarah Hall and Laura James).

Activities during the year

The EGRG continues to be a thriving research group of the RGS/IBG.

EGRG Annual Symposium and Postgraduate Forum

The EGRG Annual Symposium and Postgraduate Forum took place from 14-15th May 2008 at the School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester, on the theme of 'Economy, Nature, Space'. There were eight postgraduate presentations on day 1, followed by six presentations on day 2 from Dick Walker, Marcus Power, Daniel Buck, Diana Liverman, David Gibbs and Erik Swyngedouw. The highly successful event was attended by approximately 35 people. Many thanks are due to the two organisers – Gavin Bridge and Jason Beery – for all their hard work.

Full details of these events including presentations and a report are available on: www.egr.org.uk.

The RGS-IBG Annual Conference September 2008

The EGRG sponsored or co-sponsored the following sessions at the 2008 RGS-IBG Conference:

New geographies of the UK economy (4 sessions)

A-level reform and economic geography (2 sessions)

Networks in economic geography (2 sessions)

Transnational formations of class (2 sessions)

Spaces of learning and geographies of knowledge (2 sessions)

Overall, it was felt the EGRG had been successful in its aim from last year of organising a wider range of more high-profile sessions at the annual conference. The EGRG also sponsored three guests at the 2008 RGS-IBG Conference: Anne ter Wal (University of Utrecht, 3 days), Andrew Sayer (University of Lancaster, 1 day) and Nicholas Thoburn (University of Manchester, 1 day).

New textbook on the UK economy

Building upon the success of sessions at the 2008 RGS-IBG Conference, a book contract has been secured from Sage for an advanced text provisionally entitled 'The economic geography of the UK' (due to be published in spring 2010). The book, to be edited by Neil Coe (Manchester) and Andrew Jones (Birkbeck), will contain a varied range of 18 chapters and any funds generated will go to the EGRG.

Postgraduate activities

As always, we have been involved in supporting postgraduate work in economic geography. As noted above, the postgraduate conference this year was combined with our Annual Symposium and attracted a good number of speakers. Our MA and PhD Dissertation Prizes have continued this year and again had an encouraging response, with £100 being awarded to each winner. The prizes this year were kindly sponsored by Wiley-Blackwell. We would like to thank all those who entered their work for consideration; the quality of the work entered was again excellent, making the judging process difficult.

Our congratulations go to:

- Best PhD Thesis: **Simon Turner** (University of Durham, now at Department of Public Health & Policy, London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine) 'Learning in doing: the social anthropology of innovation in a large UK organisation'
- Best MA Dissertation: **Sarah Marie Hall** (University of Liverpool) 'Developing moral identities: articulating ethics in family consumption'.

The judging panel was Neil Coe (Chair), Mia Gray and Martin Hess.

New postgraduate working paper prize

Part of the EGRG's mission is to be accessible to new researchers, including postgraduate students and academics at an early stage in their careers. The EGRG has therefore launched a new postgraduate working paper prize for 2009. We are seeking to use the existing working paper series as a dedicated forum for early career researchers to publicise their research and receive constructive feedback from the committee. All papers submitted will receive feedback from the series editors and the EGRG committee are offering a prize of £100 to be awarded to the author of the paper deemed by the committee to be the best paper each year. The prize will be awarded to reflect outstanding work from new researchers in economic geography. At the time of submitting their paper authors should be engaged in full or part-time postgraduate research or be within one year of completing their research degree.

Other activities

Our working paper and book review series continued this year; members are encouraged to send in papers and reviews. As noted above, however, the working paper series is now being re-oriented towards postgraduate submissions. We encourage members and other interested parties to use the EGRG web site as a source of information. The committee also makes regular use of its email distribution list to consult members, particularly regarding matters arising from the RGS-IBG.

Future activities

Postgraduate prize

A call has gone out for the 2009 postgraduate prizes, including the new postgraduate working paper prize (deadline January 31st 2009). We are once again seeking external sponsorship for these awards.

Annual Symposium/Postgraduate Forum

Following the successful events of 2006-2008, these two events will again be combined at a meeting at Queen Mary, University of London, in May 2009. The event, to be organised by Al James, Sarah Hall and Laura James, will have 'Post-socialism: 20 years on' as its central theme.

RGS-IBG Conference August 2009

The EGRG is currently sponsoring the following sessions for the Manchester conference:

1. AcKnowledgeing ethical economies (Sarah Marie Hall)
2. Geographies of expertise and experts (James Faulconbridge and Sarah Hall)
3. The exploitation of geography, knowledge and society in empire economies (Roza I.M. El-Eini)
4. Boom, crunch, ouch: exploring possibilities in the spaces of financial disruption (Michael Pryke)
5. The rise of China and its implications for Europe (Mick Dunford and Weidong Liu)
6. Retail and the city: the urban geographies of retailing (Ian R. Cook, Georgios Tzimas) (joint with Urban Geography Research Group)
7. Geographical perspectives on international labour migration (Katharine Jones and Kevin Ward) (joint with Political Geography Research Group)
8. Follow the things: new cultural/economic geographies (Ian Cook, Dorothea Kleine) (joint with Sociocultural Geography Research Group)
9. Governing temptation: the emerging geographies of soft paternalism (Rhys Jones and Jessica Pykett) (joint with Political Geography Research Group)

Neil Coe, January 2009