

Economic Geography Research Group (EGRG) Chair's Annual Report, January 2012

Current Committee

Chair Andrew Jones (Birkbeck, University of London, 2009-2012)

Secretary Steven Musson (University of Reading, 2011-2014)

Treasurer Jennifer Johns (University of Liverpool, 2010-2013)

Annual Events Officers Sarah Hall (University of Nottingham) and Laura James (Institute of Education)

Book Review Editors Kim Ward, University of Exeter; Jenny Barnett, University of Exeter

Activities during the year

The EGRG continues to be a thriving and highly active research group of the RGS/IBG and has enjoyed a very successful year during 2011.

The RGS-IBG Annual Conference, London September 2011

The group sponsored an increased number of sessions (10) at the 2011 RGS-IBG Conference. However, as always there were many other sessions with an economic geography 'flavour' on the programme. The sessions were:

- 1) Geographical perspectives on ICT and Development Discourse, Policy and Practice Mark Graham (Oxford) and Dorothea Klein (RHUL)
- 2) New and Emerging Economic Geographies Jennifer Watts (Manchester) and Stacey Coppick (Nottingham)
- 3) Financial Crisis, Moral Crisis: New Urban Geographies of Blame and Responsibility Julian Brash (Montclair State, US), John Clarke and Janet Newman (both Open) and Jeff Maskovsky (CUNY)
- 4) The geopolitics of European financial landscapes James Sidaway, Manuel Aalbers and Ewald Engelen, (all Amsterdam)
- 5) Economic, Ecological and Resource Crises: Developing Coping Strategies for the Future Sarah Marie Hall (Salford) and Peter North (Liverpool)
- 6) The geography of the green economy Adrian Newton (Bournemouth) and Mark Hepworth
- 7) Economic Geographical Imaginations James Faulconbridge (Lancaster) and Sarah Hall (Nottingham)
- 8) Embodied and technical expertise in agri-food innovation: sites, relations and practices Richard Milne and Richard Lee (both Sheffield)
- 9) Start2Finish: Advancing the field of Qualitative Methodologies Research (QMR) Chantal Hales, Rachel Mulhall and Georgina Henricksen (all Birmingham)
- 10) Emerging Geographies of Transition Ralitsa Hiteva and Jennifer Watts (both Manchester)

Overall, the EGRG continues to demonstrate a very strong presence at the RGS-IBG conference.

EGRG Annual Symposium, November 2011

After the success of the enforced move from the spring to the autumn (due to the Ash cloud) in 2010, the EGRG decided to change the annual pattern of its events and keep its annual symposia in late November. This year the chosen title was '**Geographies of Inequality After the Recession**' and the event took place on 18 November at the Institute of Education in London. It was jointly organized with the Centre for Learning and Life Chances in Knowledge Economies and Societies (LLAKES) at the Institute who also contributed financially to speaker costs. The event was well attended with around 35-40 participants through the day and there were four confirmed speakers through the event:

- John Bryson, University of Birmingham: '*British Manufacturing beyond Deindustrialisation: Responding to Crisis and Recession through Innovation, Adaptation and Services*'.
- Mia Gray, University of Cambridge *Inclusive Regional Development: Social Networks In the Age of Austerity*
- Lorna Unwin, Institute of Education: '*Apprenticeship as a vehicle for social and economic regeneration*'.
- Andy Green, Institute of Education: '*Education, opportunity and social cohesion*'.

Again our thanks is recorded to Laura James for all her hard work organising the event and to LLAKES for their support.

Postgraduate activities

Our MA and PhD Dissertation Prizes have continued this year and again had an encouraging response, with £100 being awarded to each winner. We would like to thank all those who entered their work for consideration; the quality of the work entered was again excellent and the field highly competitive making the judging process difficult.

Our congratulations go to:

PhD Thesis: Laurent Frideres, (University of Cambridge). "*Spatial Industrial Clustering and Competitive Advantage: Comparing Firms Inside and Outside Industry Clusters*".
Master's Prize: Luisa Gagliardi, (London School of Economics). "*On the Engine of Innovation: Labour Mobility and Knowledge Spillovers*".

The judging panel was Andrew Jones (Chair), Steve Musson, and Sarah Hall.

Future activities

Postgraduate prize

A call has gone out for the 2012 postgraduate prizes (deadline January 31st 2012). We were unsuccessful last year but are continuing to seek external sponsorship for these awards, although revenue from the new EGRG book has eased this need.

Postgraduate Forum

Following the successful events of recent years, the next event will run in spring 2012. This is in a process of planning.

RGS-IBG Conference August 2012

The EGRG is currently sponsoring the following sessions for the annual conference which moves back to Edinburgh in 2012:

- 1) *Product as Process, Position and Promise: Exploring the qualities, qualification and spatial dynamics of goods, services and experiences* (Jenny Sojholm & Brian Hraes, Uppsala)
- 2) *Piracy: impediment or imperative for regional innovation and growth.* (Rachel Granger, Coventry)
- 3) *Evolutionary and institutional perspectives on the multinational corporation-institution nexus* (Crispian Fuller, Aston, Nick Phelps, Bartlett, UCL)
- 4) *Geographies of Young Adulthood and Employment Insecurity* (Phil Kelly, York CA, Esther Rootham, Oxford)
- 5) *Spatialities of Digital and Creative Work* (Oli Mould, Salford & Rachel Granger, Coventry)
- 6) *Field-configuring Events – Evolution, Structuring or Dissolution of Cultural and Creative Industries through temporary spatial proximity.* (Lech Suwula, Berlin, Dominic Power, Uppsala, Bastian Lange, Humboldt)

Several more are in the process of being finalized subject to the constraints of the conference timetable.

Finally

I would again like to record my thanks to the outgoing Secretary, Al James, who has done an excellent job in the last 3 years in making sure that the various activities undertaken by the EGRG ran smoothly, that we kept records and kept members informed. Once again, the Committee would also like to reiterate their ongoing thanks to Graham Bowden at the University of Manchester for all his unpaid assistance with the website and other EGRG activities.

Andrew Jones, EGRG Chair, January 2012