

Newcastle 2001

EGRG Postgraduate Symposium

4-5th July

This year it was the pleasurable task of CURDS at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne to try and continue the successful history of this event, exemplified so well by last year's Symposium at the University of Manchester.

Building upon the principles of a relaxed and informal exchange of ideas, concepts and methodologies, speakers drawn from across Europe provided twelve excellent presentations. These papers were delivered over the course of the two days within four sessions:

- Information and Communication Technologies and Regional Development.
- Institutions, Governance and Local and Regional Development.
- Knowledge, Universities and Innovation in Regional Development.
- Researching Networks.

All papers were very well received by the symposium participants, which consisted of a further six attendees together with the supportive presence of many members of staff from the host institution. Indeed, an indication of the scale of the enthusiasm behind the positive and constructive exchanges following each presentation, was the willingness to accept a slippage in the time-tabling of the sessions and thus impinge upon the numerous tea and coffee breaks so often craved for at non-stimulating events!

In addition to the four sessions listed above, the symposium was very fortunate to be able to host a discussion entitled 'Economic Geography: A Purely Academic Pursuit' led by a distinguished panel of Nick Henry, John Tomaney and David Charles. The aim of this session was to tap into the ongoing exchanges within the discipline relating to the policy relevance of economic geography. The panellists provided fascinating and thought provoking individual insights into the subject, generated by their own interpretations of current contributions within the literature together with their own personal experiences. The discussion was then opened to the floor and a very interesting and creditable exchange followed.

However, postgraduate symposiums have more to offer than purely academic endeavour, they provide an excellent opportunity for postgraduates to meet and develop friendships and links. This process was lubricated by a visit to the Newcastle Quayside for a meal and drinks in order to recharge batteries after a rewarding first day. Although by looking at some faces early the next morning, quite how well this worked in recharging batteries could be questioned.

In conclusion, as everyone agreed, the event was very constructive and successful providing an opportunity for postgraduates at whatever stage of their research to be involved in a very enjoyable event.

Finally, I would like to thank Peter O'Brien, Dr Nick Henry, Dr David Charles, Professor Andy Gillespie and the support staff within CURDS for helping to organise the event. Additionally, I would like to thank Dr Nick Henry, Dr David Charles, Dr John Tomaney and Professor Neill Marshall for their participation in the event. Furthermore, I would like to thank those other members of staff who dropped into the symposium at various points to support the event.

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