

# RGSG Newsletter

RGSG website: <http://people2.moreheadstate.edu/orgs/rgsg/index.htm>

Fall 2006

## Notes From The Chair

Greetings, All!

It is time once again to begin preparing for next year's AAG meetings. The deadline for submitting paper and session proposals is 26 October 2006. Please consider organizing a session over the next few weeks and contact any officer or board member to request RGSG sponsorship. I will circulate calls for session papers to our membership through the AAG's online discussion communities. You can send them to me at [memery@fs.fed.us](mailto:memery@fs.fed.us). Feel free also to propose co-sponsorship with other specialty groups. It's a great way for us to establish fruitful links with our colleagues in other subdisciplines.

Two noteworthy changes in the RGSG awards program will be inaugurated at the San Francisco meeting. Beginning this year, entrants in the student paper competition will be asked to submit written papers approximately 2 weeks prior to the an-

nual meeting. This will allow us to honor the award winner at the meeting rather than waiting an entire year. Also beginning in 2007, the RGSG is pleased to coordinate a new award on behalf of Brigham Young University. This award will be given to an outstanding research paper focusing on the inter-mountain West.

Finally, another exciting meeting is looming on our horizons. Dick Winchell (Eastern Washington University) and Harley Johansson (University of Idaho) have been working with a steering committee to organize the Sixth Quadrennial Conference of U.S.-Canadian-British Rural Geographers. Approximately 45 rural geographers from the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States will gather in Spokane, Washington 15 – 20 July 2007 to explore *The Global Rural: Rural Change, Connections and Scale*. We also hope to include representatives from Ireland,



Marla Emery is RGSG Chair through 2008.

Australia, and New Zealand. As a participant in the fifth quadrennial conference, I can assure you all that it will be a productive as well as enjoyable event and invite you to consider attending. For more information, please see the call for papers on page 4 or the RGSG website.

It is a pleasure to serve as the new RGSG Chair. I hope to see many of you over the coming year.

With best wishes,

Marla R. Emery

Chair, Rural Geography  
Specialty Group

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# AAG 2007 RGSG Sponsored Session CFPs

Note: This only includes sessions still accepting papers.

## Call for Papers – Rural Dynamics in North America – Past, Present, and Future.

Geographical processes are combining to make the rural landscape in North America increasingly complex. Migration is contributing in increasing social and ethnic diversity in rural communities, and economic restructuring is altering traditional rural livelihoods. Further, land use conflicts emerge surrounding different views of "community," "land" and "nature." The Rural Geography and Population Geography specialty groups will be sponsoring their seventh set of sessions at the San Francisco meetings focusing broadly on the changing rural landscape in North America. We encourage papers focusing on demographic, economic, and social processes of rural change at local, regional, and national scales. The session(s) will offer a forum for scholars employing a variety of research methodologies to present their work and exchange ideas. If you are interested in participating in this series of questions, please register for the AAG and provide us with your registration number and abstract by **October 15th** so we can have ample time to organize these sessions.

### Organizers

Peter B. Nelson  
pbnelson@middlebury.edu

John Cromartie  
jbc@ers.usda.gov

Alex Vias  
alexander.vias@uconn.edu

## Emergent Conservation Landscapes in the American West

Responding to criticism on a number of fronts about the longstanding preoccupation with "wilderness" and "intact" "natural landscapes," there is growing interest among conservationists and academics in the processes of change that produce new social and ecological realities in rural areas. Whether one is talking about rural restructuring, exurbanization, the post-productivist transition, or, more recently, multifunctional landscapes, rural change in industrialized countries appears increasingly more complex. Researchers in the United Kingdom have long examined processes of rural change and their implications for agricultural policy and environmental management, while more recently, researchers in Australia have begun to specifically examine the nature and consequences of emerging consumption and protection values in rural places. To date, however, there has been less attention on how these landscapes have manifested in North America and, importantly, what the implications are for "on-the-ground" resource/environmental management. We are interested in papers that explore these emergent conservation landscapes, the processes that produce them at multiple scales, and the related evolution of new institutions and environmental governance structures. Importantly, we encourage research that seeks to bridge the gap between research and practice. Key questions might include:

—What types of conservation landscapes are emerging? What ecological changes and management challenges are associated with different

types? What key processes are giving shape to their contours?

—What new environmental or social justice issues are being created by these new conservation landscapes and what forms of environmental governance are most effective in promoting environmental and social sustainability?

—What role do markets, regulations, and conservation incentives (subsidies) play in landowner decisionmaking?

—What are the linkages between the "rural" and the "urban" in the production of these new landscapes?

Possible topics might include any of the following? Post-productivism and transitional/working landscapes; amenity migration and hobby farms or ranches; exurbanization and conservation subdivisions; conservation buyers, conservation easements, and private wildlife reserves; indigenous claims and extractive reserves; new environmental governance structures and collaborative forms of decisionmaking; or any combinations thereof.

We encourage the submission of papers that span the full spectrum of theoretical and methodological approaches prevalent in the discipline. Although we are eager to focus our attention on the American West, we also welcome research on other areas of North America. Depending on the number of papers submitted, we envision a series of panels grouped by region or theme.

For more information or to submit an abstract, contact Patrick Hurley (hurleyp@cofc.edu) or Hannah Gosnell (gosnellh@geo.oregonstate.edu).

(continued on page 3)

## RGSG Sponsored Session CFPs

(continued from page 2)

### 'Comparing Organic Urban Places (COUP): Learning about periurban food systems around the world'

Central questions of human geography can be explored in contemporary turns to organic and local foods. Why do people adapt differently to similar places? Why do people act similarly in different places? What urban parameters trigger long-term increases in organic consumption? Several studies (Organic Trade Association 2002; Makatouni 2003; Raynolds 2004) identify high levels of education and income as leading parameters for organic consumption. A stereotype persists of the organic consumer as an affluent, educated, white woman. Yet, one can walk past hundreds of farmers' market stands in affluent, predominantly white Palm Springs before finding organic produce. Hartman (2004) notes that over 50% of organic pur-

chases in the US are made by non-whites - but what are the social, ethnic, political, economic and regulatory factors that encourage organic consumption in other cities around the world?

One of the goals of this session is to explore the methodological advantages and disadvantages of international comparative research (qualitative, quantitative or ethnographic) on alternative food networks (AFNs). Of particular interest is the topic of sustainable urban food systems and the actors involved, e.g. local government, non-governmental organizations including consumer and environmental organizations, retailers selling organic products, direct marketing by farmers, and the out-of-home Ausserhausverflegung) consumption of organic food such as institutional cafeterias and restaurants. We invite researchers to explore other factors influencing urban food systems, such as food scares, family

farm structural change, globalization and so on. While the methodology of comparing cities is tricky (laying researchers open to the charge of comparing apples and oranges), there is promise in turning this charge on its head: Why is it that cities as different in cultural tradition and residential patterns as Munich (Germany) and Portland (OR), can have such similar alternative food networks? We welcome your data and experiences in comparing organic urban places.

Key words: urban food systems, international comparative research, organic food consumption, organic food production, networks

An abstract of 250 words (max), plus up to 5 keywords, is due to Melissa Schafer (mschafer@wzw.tum.de) and Bruce Scholten (bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com) **ASAP after October 2, 2006.**

## 2006 RGSG Student Paper Award

The 2006 student paper award goes to Ryan E. Galt from the Department of Geography at the University of Wisconsin-Madison for his paper entitled, "The Political Ecology of Regulatory Risk in Costa Rica: Export Farmer's Responses to U.S. Pesticide Residue Regulations."

Because of the depth and strength of the pool of entrants, we would also like to acknowledge the fol-

lowing students as finalists.

—Po-Yi Huan (University of Wisconsin-Madison) "Contested Images for Symbolized Tribe: Tourism and Agricultural Transformation in Fataan"

—Jeff Onstead (UC Santa Barbara) "Effectiveness of a Differential Tax Assessment Program for Farmland Conservation in Tulare

County, California"

Andrew Howard (Freelance Geographer) "Consuming Rurality: Wine Production and Landscape in Walla Walla, Washington"

Congratulations to everyone!

*Portions of content were originally posted by Pete Nelson to RGSG News Listserve*

# The Global Rural: Rural Change, Connections, and Scale

## The Sixth Quadrennial Conference of British, Canadian, and American Rural Geographers

### Spokane, Washington

### July 15 – 22, 2007

While rural spaces may appear at first glance to be distant and removed from the modern global economy, such a view of rural spaces represents a gross misunderstanding of both past and present rural landscapes. Rural populations, economies, and cultures have been, are, and will continue to be intricately connected to global forces operating at many different spatial scales.

The sixth quadrennial conference of British, Canadian, and American geographers seeks scholars actively interrogating these themes of rural connections. This broadly cast call for participation invites those interested in rural areas to submit abstracts describing their proposed paper. In addition, the organizing committee is open to other forms of participation including panel discussions and a poster session. Topics may include (but are not limited to) the following:

- What are the cultural implications of accelerated exurban growth?
- What does the retirement of the baby boom and general aging of the population mean for rural commu-

nities in different regions?

- How is 'community' renegotiated in the context of increasing immigration and migration into rural destinations?
- How do rural communities navigate and plan for their 'post-productivist' rural futures?
- What are the impacts of rising energy prices on rural livelihoods?
- How have forces of economic restructuring altered the uses of rural space?
- In what ways have agricultural communities responded to national and international competition?

Those proposing panels should identify the panel theme, general questions for discussion, and specific participants. These participants need not be from a single country but do need to be identified prior to the selection process.

Representatives from each of the participating countries will then each select 13 participants for the conference. This year, we have also allotted a total of 6 spaces to geographers from Australia, New Zealand, and Ireland (3 to Australia,

3 to New Zealand, 3 to Ireland) and welcome participants from those countries as well.

*Please submit a 200 word abstract, cover letter, and 2-page vitae by November 1st to the appropriate contact for your respective country. Additional details for the conference are available at the RGSG web site:*

*<http://people2.moreheadstate.edu/orgs/rgsg/index.htm>. Participants will be notified of their selection by January 31st.*

*Contacts:*

*US – Marla Emery - [memery@fs.fed.us](mailto:memery@fs.fed.us)*

*Canada – Ken Beesley - [beesleyk@brandonu.ca](mailto:beesleyk@brandonu.ca)*

*UK – Henry Buller - [H.Buller@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:H.Buller@exeter.ac.uk)*

*Australia/New Zealand – Neil Argent - [nargent@une.edu.au](mailto:nargent@une.edu.au)*

*Ireland – Mary Cawley - [mary.cawley@nuigalway.ie](mailto:mary.cawley@nuigalway.ie)*

***Conference Host: The Rural Geography Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers***

## Check Out the RGSG Website!

Building upon the great work of Melanie McCalmont, the RGSG website is being updated for your convenience. The website has moved. It is now located at <http://people2.moreheadstate.edu/orgs/rgsg/index.htm>. Improvements will be ongoing, but new features include links to information about the Sixth Quadrennial British-

American-Canadian Rural Geography Conference. You can also submit newsletter items online, as well as any suggestions for website improvement. You may also contact me directly at [v.craig@moreheadstate.edu](mailto:v.craig@moreheadstate.edu).

Remember that discussion forums intended for use by group members

are available on the 'Communities' page inside the AAG site (you must log in to use them).

I've enjoyed serving you as newsletter and web editor, and I look forward to doing so through 2008.

Best,

Verdie A. Craig

# Books Published

**Note: These are submitted by authors and publishers, and do not constitute a review by the editor or RGS G.**

## **Sociological Perspectives of Organic Agriculture: From Pioneer to Policy**

**Editors:** GC Holt, *food-etc.co.uk*, Reading, UK, and M Reed, *University of Exeter, UK*

**Publication:** July 2006, CABI Publishing

**Pages:** 336

**Binding:** Hardback

**ISBN:** 1 84593 038 X

**Price:** £55.00 (US\$100.00)

**Readership:** Academic and market researchers of anthropological and socioeconomic rural-food development studies, non-governmental food and farming organizations, private enterprises in the agri-food sector, and the interested public.

**Description:** SPOA brings together articles by established and emerging scholars to present a fresh look at the dynamics of the organic agricultural sector in national, European and global markets. The authors draw their conclusions from a range of investigations and social theories to unravel a complexity of influences. Thus the book is an important step towards understanding the connection between agricultural economics and social development. The book depicts organic agriculture as a stimulus for social change and demonstrates how producers, consumers and governments are actively engaging with the organic food supply chain.

## **The View From Vermont Tourism and the Making of an American Rural Landscape**

**Author:** Blake Harrison

**Available:** December 2006

**Publication:** University of Vermont Press, University Press of New England **Pages:** 352

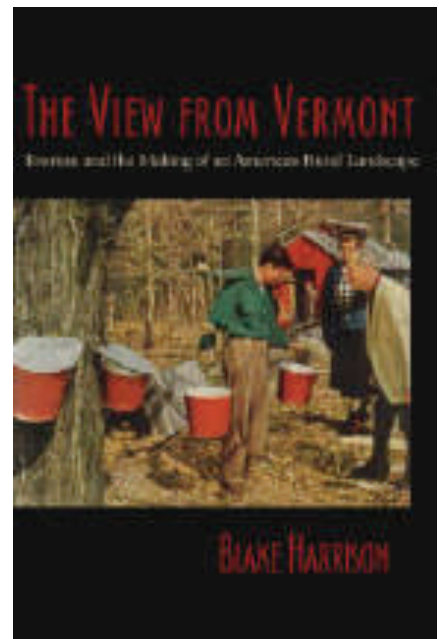
### **Price & ISBN, by Binding:**

\$29.95 Paper, 1-58465-591-7

\$65.00 Cloth, 1-58465-566-6

With its small native population, proximity to major metropolitan areas, and bucolic rural beauty, Vermont was fated to be a tourist mecca, forever associated in the popular imagination with maple syrup, fall colors, and ski bunnies. Tourism, for good and ill, has always been the decisive factor in the conception of rural Vermont. What is surprising, however, is the degree to which we have accepted this notion of rural Vermont as a somehow timeless entity. Blake Harrison's rich and rewarding study instead presents the construction of Vermont's landscape as a complex and ever-changing dynamic informed by progressive, modernist, and reformist thought, competing views of economic expansion, rural and urban prejudice and social exclusion, and (more recently) by land use planning and environmentalism. This broad-based study includes the early history of Vermont tourism, the concomitant abandonment of farms with the rise of the summer home, the creation of an "unspoiled" Vermont (from billboards, at least), the impact of Vermont's ski industry on tradition-bound tourism, and later efforts to legislate growth and protect an increasingly static ideal of a rural Vermont.

While grounded within a specific Vermont view, Harrison has much to contribute to broader studies of rural places, tourism, and landscapes in American culture. His analysis of how physical landscapes affect and are affected by our imagined landscape, and the insight afforded by his juxtaposition of leisure and labor, will deeply inform our understanding of rural tourist landscapes for years to come. This is a truly interdisciplinary work that will satisfy and challenge historians and geographers alike.



BLAKE HARRISON holds a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and has taught courses on the human geography of New England and North America at Montana State University, Yale University, and Quinnipiac University. He currently lives in New Haven, Connecticut.