

# URBAN GEOGRAPHY SPECIALTY GROUP NEWSLETTER

Assoc. of American Geographers

<http://geog.uwm.edu/ugsg>

Vol. 25, No. 2, November, 2004

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## LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

These are difficult but also exciting times. Vicky Lawson, the President of the AAG this year is convening the presidential plenary panel under the theme of "Fear and Hope." Her 'hope' is to challenge scholars to examine *both* sides of this equation rather than to follow our usual tendency, which is either to deconstruct and problematize *or* to legitimate and praise. Urban scholars should take up Lawson's gauntlet, for we are frequently divided into intellectual and political 'camps', and I encourage the members of the UGSG to attend Vicky's plenary panel at the AAG next year.

We have a number of new people working on the UGSG Board this year and I encourage readers to view the section of the newsletter in which board members are introduced. **We also have a new newsletter editor, Eric Boschmann, who will begin his editing duties with the next 'pre-Holiday' newsletter.** Eric is currently working for his doctoral degree at the Ohio State University. I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank our retiring editor, Margaret Hudson, for her superb newsletter writing and editing over the past few years. She kept the presses rolling even when her own intellectual pursuits called, and Gerry Pratt and I are immensely grateful for all her hard work over the past several years. I would also like to thank Gerry Pratt, who has finished a great two-year term as president and is now helping the transition to a new Board. I will be serving as the new president of the UGSG through 2005. For those who are interested in knowing more about my current research themes you can find some (mostly updated) topics of interest and a few publications on my web page at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/kmitch>.

Board members have kindly agreed to take on the following service activities during the year: Eugene McCann and Sarah Elwood will be serving as the judges of the MA thesis competition; Scott Salmon and I will serve as the judges of the PhD competition; **Owen Dwyer and Dan Trudeau are the coordinators of the specialty groups at Denver this year;** and Larry Ford, David Wilson and Alison Mountz will be the judges of the Glenda Laws undergraduate paper competition. If you or a student of yours would like to submit a thesis or dissertation to the competition, please send a hard copy (with a cover letter) to each of the judges. In the case of financial hardship it is acceptable to send an electronic version only, but this must be cleared with the judges in advance.

I would like to remind everyone to **encourage students to apply for these prizes.** I would also like to ask UGSG members to convince their respective departments to subsidize the mailing fees for undergraduate and graduate students who would like to submit their work to these competitions. The board is concerned that the costs of sending a dissertation or thesis to two judges is providing a disincentive for some of our poorer students.

We are now working to confirm our 'plenary' speakers at the AAG conference in Denver. We have a tentative acceptance from Ananya Roy, who is a professor in the Department of Urban Planning at U.C. Berkeley. I will announce the speakers more formally in the next newsletter.

Thanks again to all of our new Board Members for their willingness to serve in this capacity. I look forward to the next two years and to seeing everyone in Denver this spring.

**Katharyne Mitchell**, University of Washington, kmitch@u.washington.edu

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Hi all. I apologize for not having mailed this letter earlier, when I could have potentially helped to circulate CFP's for the upcoming AAG, but I believe our listserv and others have served our members well for distributing these CFP's and my letter would have only duplicated those efforts. However, I can remind everyone with registered sessions that they should **contact Dan Trudeau, Daniel.Trudeau@Colorado.edu or Owen Dwyer, odwyer@iupui.edu for UGSG AAG session sponsorship.**

This short letter is my last for the specialty group and I thank everyone that contributed to our letters these last couple of years. I have enjoyed my stint as editor and am only withdrawing my assistance now because I need to concentrate on the job market and finishing my dissertation. **Eric Boschmann, boschmann.1@osu.edu**, has generously offered to take over these newsletter duties and I believe he will do a wonderful job. Eric is beginning his third year as a PhD student in the Department of Geography at the Ohio State University. His research direction centers around the use of GIS and spatial analysis methods to study confounding problems related to metropolitan jobs- housing balances, commuting, and job accessibility of marginalized and disadvantaged populations in the urban environment. He is also involved with Dr. Mei-Po Kwan's research related to post- 9/11 Muslim identities. This past summer Eric assisted with the organization of a workshop on GIS education for undergraduate instructors hosted by the OSU Department of Geography and continues to teach introductory World Regional Geography courses. His previous academic degrees were in the fields of History/Social Sciences (B.A.) and Ethics & Theology (M.A.). Eric will be serving as the UGSG newsletter editor for the next two years and looks forward to interacting with, and hearing the different news from, the many urban geographers of this specialty group.

Though this letter is very short, previous letters have included: CFP's for conferences, Job Postings, and Information on Awards, Grants, and Scholarships, Departmental News, and other information for our members. I encourage everyone to continue to send Eric this type of information. In future letters, like the next one coming out in December, we will provide information about applying for the specialty group student awards that Katharyne mentioned in her letter as well as a ballot and candidate bios for board member elections.

In closing, I include below the usual reminders about membership changes and the listserv. Thanks again to all who helped me to create these newsletters and I promise to not lose contact with you and the UGSG. I hope to see many of you at the next AAG and, until then, please have a productive and happy couple of months.

Sincerely,

**M a r g a r e t H u d s o n**

Outgoing Editor

Ph.D. Candidate

University of Georgia

**1) Membership changes. Please contact the AAG, at [address@aag.org](mailto:address@aag.org) with address or e-mail changes.** Instead of maintaining a separate member database, I contact the AAG for an updated membership list every time I send out a newsletter.

**2) The urbgeog listserv and the UGSG membership list are two separate entities.** Anyone can become a listserv reader; Urban Geography Specialty Group Members have joined with us when they become members of the AAG. UGSG dues are \$7 in addition to the AAG membership. Student membership is free. While of some of the information passed around on the urbgeog listserv also appears here in the newsletter, the newsletter often contains additional items not circulated on the internet. The newsletter also provides a collection of related urban geography information that would be time consuming to compile from the various listservs.

**3) There are two ways to subscribe the urban geog listserv.**

a. Provide subscription information at following url:

**<http://listserv.arizona.edu/cgi-bin/wa?SUBED1=urbgeog&A=1>**

or

- b. Send an e-mail to **listserv@listserv.arizona.edu** with the following as the only line in the body of the message: **subscribe urbgeog Firstname Lastname** Substitute your first name for *Firstname*. Substitute your last name for *Lastname*.

NOTE: If you have a signature file that gets appended to each and every e-mail message you send, you have two options when sending listserv commands. One, temporarily disable this facility when you send listserv messages or two, include the command, **end**, in the body of the text as the last command. The listserv will disregard all lines in your message after this command. For example, I could join the listserv with the following commands in the body of an e-mail:

**subscribe urbgeog Margaret Hudson**  
**end**

## **DEPARTMENTAL AND OTHER NEWS**

### **From Brenda Kayzar, San Diego State University:**

The Geography Department at San Diego State University is excited to have established a relationship with the neighboring community of City Heights-which is located between SDSU's campus and downtown San Diego. The community encompasses a large geographic area, a unique topography of canyons and mesas, and 16 distinct neighborhoods. It is also one of the most diverse and densely populated communities in the county, housing over 70,000 residents who speak 30 languages. Historically challenged with high unemployment, poverty, and crime rates, and low homeownership and incomes, ongoing efforts have been made to improve the community. Recently over \$137 million was spent on building new affordable housing, schools, and recreational, social service, retail, and office space. While the transformation of this community is a work in progress, increases in property values, reductions in crime rates, and continued interest in new investment suggest that City Heights is 'turning'. A local philanthropic interest has been intimately involved with the most recent changes, funding a large portion of the new projects. Through a contact within this organization, our department learned of their desire to understand how the most recent redevelopment efforts have affected the community-economically as well as socially-and if philanthropically supported redevelopment efforts could be replicated in other communities.

Last year Drs. Ford and Bosco and Ph. D. candidate Brenda Kayzar began collaborating on a research project aimed at examining the process of redevelopment in City Heights so that the current outcomes could be better understood. Through interviews, archival research, and fieldwork observation they began to trace the network of actors involved, gaining insight into how these networks were formed and the evolution of the landscape and the improvement projects themselves. Their preliminary findings were presented at the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers meeting last September and the California Geographical Society meeting this past May. Further interviews and GIS maps of the area will soon supplement their work.

Interest in this community has spread within the department. Currently three master's students are focusing their thesis research on issues within City Heights. The benefits from becoming actively engaged in research centered on a local and economically excluded community are many. First there is the benefit of enriching the urban literature (forthcoming!) with detailed locally based case studies. Second the research results and conclusions, when shared with local political and planning agencies, can provide vital insight into the overlooked assets and often misrepresented problems associated with this type of community. This is insight that might not be gained if the costs of conducting the research were born by the agencies themselves. Third, philanthropic and social service agencies stand to gain a better understanding of the community they serve through the research that is conducted. Finally, within our department multiple projects have resulted in cross collaboration, shared ideas, and camaraderie. We are looking forward to sharing the results of our efforts both within the community of City Heights and San Diego, and within the geographic community.

### **From Dan Trudeau, University of Colorado, Boulder:**

As many of you may know, the Urban Geography Specialty Group's web site enables public access to syllabi from many different college and university courses on urban topics (see <http://geog.uwm.edu/ugsg/syllabi.html>).

It is time to update and expand this valuable resource. On behalf of the specialty group I ask that instructors and professors share with the broader community of urban scholars their most recent syllabi for urban geography-themed courses. Introductory courses as well as upper and graduate level courses are all welcome. Submissions for courses that attend to urban geography themes in contexts outside of North America are especially encouraged.

As a recent first-time instructor, I found the online syllabi to be very helpful in planning my own course. We can help make this great resource even better by updating and adding new syllabi. If you are interested in sharing a syllabus, please email me, Dan Trudeau([trudeau@colorado.edu](mailto:trudeau@colorado.edu)) with the URL for your course(s) or with a softcopy of your syllabus attached and in Microsoft Word format.

**From Seth Marcus, HUD:**

HUD Releases GIS Datasets

If you are among those who use GIS for urban analysis or mapping neighborhood change, and have been frustrated when census tract boundaries overlap municipal boundaries, then you will be excited to learn that HUD has recently posted a set of boundary files that will help your research efforts.

This new dataset, developed by HUD's Office of Policy Development and Research (PD&R), provide data for census tracts and block groups that are split by jurisdiction boundaries (summary levels 080, 090, and 091). This will allow you to get precise census data for any city or municipality, without "overlap."

The files and documentation can be found at the following website:

<http://www.huduser.org/datasets/gis.html>

Other datasets, such as Fair Market Rents, Qualified Census Tracts, the State of the Cities Database, can also be found on the HUDUSER website:

<http://www.huduser.org/datasets/pdrdatas.html>

HUDUSER provides more than 4 million downloads annually to researchers, community planners, state and local governments, and others interested in the latest publications and data on housing, community development, assisted housing, and other HUD initiatives. For more information, visit <http://www.huduser.org> or call 1-800-245-2691.

**From Dan Immergluck, Grand Valley State University, Michigan:**

New Book Announcement:

Credit to the Community: Community Reinvestment and Fair Lending Policy in the U.S., by Dan Immergluck, has been published by M.E. Sharpe.

The publisher is offering the book for a special price of \$39.95, 50% off the regular price. To get the ½ price offer, you must order in one of the following two ways:

1. call the 800 # (800-541-6563) and talk to anyone in customer service - tell them you want to order the book and get the special price of \$39.95. The code word is "Immer".

2. send an email to [custserv@mesharpe.com](mailto:custserv@mesharpe.com) to order the book (someone from customer service will get back to them) - to get the special price, the same code word (Immer) should be mentioned in the email.

The book is a policy history of fair lending laws and CRA. It discusses the history and current state of affairs of discrimination and redlining in mortgage and small business markets, including current problems and trends. The book places fair lending and CRA policies in the historical context of U.S. policy regarding financial markets and the support of financial institutions. It also looks at the politics of policy analysis in this area, detailing some of the ideology and interests that have shaped policy-making, particularly in the last 30 years.

Some early comments on the book include:

"Once again Dan Immergluck works his special magic by combining impeccable research with thoughtful public policy commentary. For those seeking to expand access to capital in low-income and low-wealth communities, this is a must read."

-William Apgar - former Assistant Secretary of Housing at the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development and now Senior Scholar at Harvard's Joint Center for Housing Studies

"Credit to the Community provides an incisive look at a remarkable chapter in the ongoing struggle to eliminate inequities in the availability of consumer credit. Dan Immergluck has done a splendid job of chronicling a transformative grassroots movement while also providing a much-needed conceptual framework for comprehending both its significance and future direction. There is much here for both veterans and novices on all sides of this struggle, as well as for the general public."

-Allen Fishbein, Consumer Federation of America

"Immergluck is a most talented researcher and advocate. Credit to the Community is a rare book that combines rigorous research with astute policy recommendations."

-Greg Squires, George Washington University

### **From Joseph Scarpaci, Virginia Tech:**

Virginia Techs Joseph L. Scarpaci receives Alumni Award for Excellence in International Programs  
BLACKSBURG, Va., Sept. 17, 2004.

Joseph L. Scarpaci, of Blacksburg, professor in the Department of Geography in the College of Natural Resources at Virginia Tech, has received the University's 2004 Alumni Award for Excellence in International Programs. Established in 1976 by the Virginia Tech Alumni Association, the Alumni Award for Excellence in International Programs is presented each year to recognize leadership among faculty members, administrators and staff members who have made contributions that have had a significant and lasting impact upon the advancement of Virginia Techs expanding international mission.

The selection is made by a subcommittee drawn from the ranks of the University Council on International Programs along with a representative of the Alumni Association. Scarpaci has demonstrated unparalleled excellence in supporting and enhancing international programs and curricula at Virginia Tech. In particular, his long-term dedication to providing rewarding study-abroad experiences in Latin America is highly worthy of recognition. His endeavors have combined a blend of classroom activities and intensive fieldwork experiences that have enriched the education of students and adults from Virginia Tech throughout the United States. Scarpaci's Study Abroad Program in Cuba is now the longest-running program of its kind in the United States. The program has been widely acclaimed by prestigious organizations such as the American Geographical Society, World Affairs Council of Philadelphia, and the Association for Collegiate Schools of Planning. Scarpaci earned a bachelor's in geography from Rutgers University, a master's in geography from Penn State, and a Ph.D. from the University of Florida in geography, specializing in minor health services administration. He is a member of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) and former chair of the Medical Geography Specialty Group and the Medical Geography Group of AAG, as well as a member of the Association for the Study of Cuban Economy, the Latin American Studies Association,

and the Conference of Latin American Geographers (CLAG). He has received GLAGs Carl O. Sauer Award for Distinguished Scholarship for lifetime career achievement and the College of Architecture and Urban Studies Award for Excellence in Teaching and Award for Creative Achievement. He was a Fulbright Scholar to Chile and twice to Colombia.

**From Patricia Price, Florida International University:**

The National Science Foundation's Human and Social Dynamics program has awarded \$600,000 for a two-year project titled "Civic and Place Engagement in Three Latino Enclave Neighborhoods in Transition". Co-PIs include Damián Fernández and Patricia Price (Florida International University), Daniel Arreola and Christopher Lukinbeal (Arizona State University), Maria de los Angeles Torres (DePaul University), and Timothy Reddy (University of Notre Dame). This is a collaborative project that brings together political scientists, geographers, and anthropologists to examine inner-ring latino enclave neighborhoods in transition in Miami, Phoenix, and Chicago. The relationship between changing modes of civic engagement and local landscape transformation will be explored using survey, interview, and GIS techniques. The project is housed in Florida International University's Cuban Research Center, which is directed by Fernández.