

RGRG NEWSLETTER * Winter 2019-20 Early Edition (30Nov19) * <http://rgrg.co.uk/newsletter>

* Email text & pix to Editor bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com * Photos: BAS, C. Howie, A. McMullen, RGS-IBG, Wiki

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EDITOR'S NOTES: RGRG WEBSITE MIGRATED TO WORDPRESS: <http://rgrg.co.uk/>



Cooperation by Sarah Evans of RGS-IBG, RGRG Secretary Megan Palmer-Abbs and Newsletter editor Bruce Scholten has migrated RGRG website from Durham University to WordPress in London. Megan selected the striking mountain header above for home page. Sections including News, Committee, and Events are being populated by Felipe Machado et al. Bruce designed a new vertical RGRG logo – to change or disappear according to members' opinions.

An **Archives** page may be added - though a link *from* the RGRG Newsletter page may suffice.

You can now read and download newsletters back to winter 2002. Look for this header when hitting: <http://rgrg.co.uk/newsletter>



Please email submissions with 'RGRG News' in subject line to: bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com

1a. RGRG EVENTS: RGS-IBG London International Conference 1-4 September 2020.

Conference Chair Uma Kothari (Professor of Migration & Postcolonial Studies Manchester) notes the 2020 theme: **Borders, borderlands and bordering. Not just between countries, also life & death.**

Details: <https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/key-dates-and-deadlines/#>

Key dates:

Deadline for programme submissions (organised sessions, papers and posters)

Friday 14 February 2020

Conference organisers confirm acceptance of sessions and papers - End of March 2020.

Registration opens

March 2020. Online registration opens. Deadline for reduced rate ('early-bird') registrations is

Friday 12 June 2020. (Session organisers, chairs, presenting authors and discussants) must be registered.

Provisional conference programme available

Mid-May 2020. Provisional conference programme shared. Session organisers and presenting authors invited to make corrections & request final changes to titles & abstracts - requests emailed to ac2020@rgs.org by Friday 26 June 2020.

Deadline for early-bird (reduced rate) registration

Friday 12 June 2020. Chairs, panellists, discussants, presenting authors et al should be [registered](#) by this date.

Final conference programme announced

Wednesday 1 July 2020. Final conference programme published on conference website. Session organisers, authors and presenters may make later changes on the website, but not in programme book. Room allocations are made and announced in late July 2020. Changes may be made to online programme at any time up to and during the conference.

The AC2020 conference will take place from Tuesday 1 to Friday 4 September 2020.

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1b. EVENTS: RGRG SESSIONS at RGS-IBG London 1-4 September 2020.

RGRG Secretary Megan exhorts us to ready session proposals, abstracts and papers. Felipe Machado posted details on: <http://rgrg.co.uk/category/uncategorized/rgrg-session-call-for-rgs-with-ibg-international-conference-2020>



From: meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com <meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com>

Sent: 21 November 2019 12:35 To: meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com

Subject: RGS with IBG International Conference 2020: RGRG call for sessions

Dear All - The Rural Geographies Research Group (RGRG) welcomes proposals for sessions to be sponsored by the RGRG at the 2020 Annual Conference of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG). The RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2020 will take place from the 1-4th September at the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) in London. It will be chaired by Professor Uma Kothari (University of Manchester), and will have as its theme 'Borders, borderlands and bordering'. The call for sessions at the conference has recently opened (see <https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/> for more information).

We invite proposals for sessions from members of the RGRG and anybody working on rural geography topics (including e.g. digital technologies, food security, changing states of rural geographies, co-production of The Rural, sustainable development issues). We also look to work in collaboration with other RGS research groups so please consider your topic and how this is framed in the wider context of geography. Proposals should relate to debates, literature or approaches around current rural geography topics, preference will be given to those linking with the 2020 conference theme, although this is not absolutely essential.

We encourage innovative session formats (forums, creative engagement, workshops) but also are happy to receive more traditional approaches (papers, panels, discussions) practitioner forums, creative engagements, discussions or

workshops. Innovative sessions and formats are encouraged. Proposals for, or questions about, RGRG sponsored sessions should be sent to Megan Palmer-Abbs meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com.

Once session proposals are received the RGRG committee will review and agree the most pertinent proposals, reverting back to you with a decision by mid-January. Proposals should be submitted to the RGRG on the RGS Session Proposal form by **10 January 2020**. The form can be found here: [https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/programme-\(1\)/guidance-for-session-organisers/](https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/programme-(1)/guidance-for-session-organisers/)

They should comprise

- (i) Title of session;
- (ii) Name of Co-sponsoring groups, if applicable
- (iii) Name and Contact Details for Session Convenors
- (iv) Abstract, outlining scope of session – 200 words max
- (v) Number of session timeslots that are sought – this year session may not normally occupy more than 2 time slots.
- (vi) Indication, if known, of preferred organization of session, e.g. 4 x 20min presentation, plus 20min discussion or 5 x 15min presentation, with 5min question for each, we would encourage you to be creative in your use of the format. Sessions last 1 hour 40 mins ([see here](#) for some great ideas on session formats)
- (vii) Indication, if known for any non-standard arrangements.

As per previous years, the RGS is able to provide a limited number of passes for those who would be otherwise unable to attend due to the costs involved. As such, we encourage you to think about the inclusion of international contributors and participation from outside academia in your session.

Once your session has been accepted by the RGRG it will be your responsibility to secure your presenters, we can of course help by circulating your session abstract on the RGRG website and Social Media. Final session arrangements and contributors must be in place by 14th February 2020, with the Chair submitting the session paperwork to RGS by this date. See here [https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/programme-\(1\)/guidance-for-session-organisers/](https://www.rgs.org/research/annual-international-conference/programme-(1)/guidance-for-session-organisers/)

We look forward to receiving your proposals!

Kind Regards, Megan

Dr Megan Palmer-Abbs PhD BSc (Open) Dip (Environmental Policy) MIED FRGS
Secretary to the RGS Rural Geographers Research Group (RGRG) Committee
E meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com

1c. AAG DENVER, USA: 6-10 April 2020: <https://www2.aag.org/aagannualmeeting/>

Ready for 6,000 presentations, posters, workshops, and field trips by leading scholars, experts, and researchers? Top British geographers such as Prof Terry Marsden (Cardiff) have often plied Association of American Geographers' conferences. *RGRG Newsletter* does too. events. Denver is an eminently walkable city, with friendly people, Tex-Mex street food, art museums and live music among the best in the American West. Originally, geographers were called travellers. Travel to the AAG.



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION
of GEOGRAPHERS
ANNUAL MEETING • April 6-10, 2020 • Denver, CO

2a. RGRG AGM at RGS-IBG London 28-30 August 2019

=> AGM DETAILS ARE MISSING. PLEASE SEND NOTES TO EDITOR: bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com

RGS RGRG AGM 2019 Agenda

Rural Geography Research Group AGM: 2019

Wednesday 29th, August 2019, 1.10pm to 2.25pm, Sir Alexander Fleming Building: Rm 120

1. Apologies for absence / welcome
 2. Minutes of the 2018 AGM
 3. Matters arising from the minutes
 4. Chair's Report
 5. Treasurer's Report
 6. Committee elections
- Positions available:

- Chair, • Treasurer TBD, Postgraduate representatives x 2, Ordinary Members x 4, Co-opted member x 1, Roles requiring a volunteer.
- o Website
- o Social Media
- o GDPR
- 7. Dissertation prizes
- 8. Future events
- 9. Networking
- 10. Membership issue
- 11. Newsletter
- 12. AOB



LONDON RGRG AGM 29 Aug 2019 RGS-IBG conference.

Prof Martin Phillips succeeded Prof Nigel Walford as Chair. Find more election details on the Committee page: <http://rgrg.co.uk/rgrg-committee> Membership is growing with industrious postgrads and newly minted PhDs alongside stalwarts of the Rural Geography Research Group. (BA Scholten 29Aug19)

AGM 2019 elections determined the 2019-20 Committee below:

Position	Name	Email	Term dates (start and end years)
Chair	Professor Martin Phillips	Martin.phillips@le.ac.uk	2019-2022
Secretary	Dr Megan Palmer-Abbs (MPA)	meganpalmerabbs@btinternet.com	2018-2021
Treasurer	Dr Gareth Enticott	enticottg@cardiff.ac.uk	2016-2020
Ordinary Member (Dissertation Prizes)	Dr Fiona Williams	fiona.williams@chester.ac.uk	2018-2021
Newsletter Editor	Dr Bruce Scholten	bruce.scholten@btopenworld.com	2018-2021
Ordinary Member	Professor Damian Maye	dmaye@glos.ac.uk	2019-2022
Ordinary Member(Social Media)	Mr Felipe da Silva Machado	felipe.dasilvamachado@plymouth.ac.uk	2019-2022
Ordinary Member	Dr Eifiona Thomas Lane	eifiona.thomaslane@bangor.ac.uk	2019-2022
Ordinary Member	Dr Andrew Maclaren	a.s.maclaren@gmail.com	2018-2021
Ordinary Member	Dr Julie Urquhart	jurquhart1@glos.ac.uk	2018-2021
Ordinary member (co-opted)	Dr Keith Halfacree	k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk	2018-2021
Ordinary Member (co-opted)	Mr Fidel Budy	fib9@aber.ac.uk	2019-2022
Postgrad Representative	Aimee Morse	aimeelouisemorse@gmail.com	2019-2020
Postgrad Representative	TBC		

2b. RGRG at RGS-IBG London 28-30 August 2019: Editor's photos



'Raising Trust in Rural Governance' provoked stimulating discussion. Current RGRG Secretary Megan Palmer-Abbs led a lively session including past Secretary Keith Halfacree. Pink and orange are trending. New design RGS-IBG conference lanyards had multi-coloured patterns reminiscent of the South African flag. Plastic water bottles are out, permanent 'growlers' in. But coffee is still in high demand.



Artists, civil society leaders and rural geographers discussed Raising Trust in Rural Governance.



Raising Trust in Rural Governance.



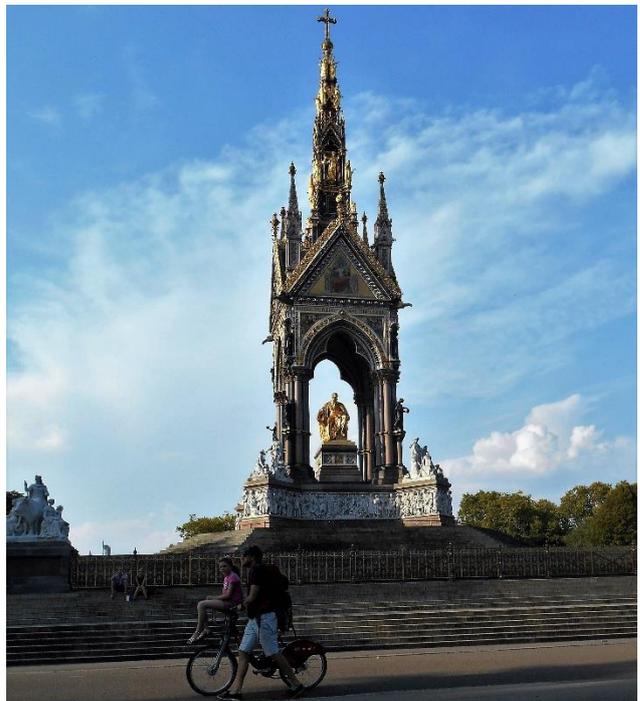
RGS-IBG HQ, So. Kensington, London. Easy walking from Hyde Park, Albert Hall, Imperial College and the Victoria & Albert Museum, the luncheon meadow attracts many of 2000 annual conference goers. In 2019 a replica of Ranulf Fiennes' Antarctica barn joined them. (Bas 2019)



RGS-IBG front of house person Annette McCormack calms the waters at registration. Behind, a book exhibit.



Another side of Royal Albert Hall is visible from the luncheon meadow behind RGS-IBG HQ.



American tourists love Hyde Park, saying, 'There's so much history there!' Prince Albert, too! (Bas 2019)



The rural quadrennial brings together geographers from the UK Royal Geographical Society (with Institute of British Geographers) Rural Geography Research Group, the United States' American Association of Geographers Rural Geography Specialty Group and Canadian Association of Geographers Rural Geography Study Group.

Every four years the conference is held in either the UK, Canada or USA on rotation. The 'Quadrennial' held its ninth conference this year, July 13-19, 2019, in Vermont, USA. Cheryl Morse (University of Vermont) and Peter Nelson (Middlebury College)

were the organisers. Vermont is an incredible place to host such an event that allowed us to at once share our research through our own conference presentations, where we got to hear about and discuss pressing rural concerns, as well as 'get out of the armchair' and into the field for experiential learning by visiting a number of Vermont-based working landscape and rural community enterprises as well as meet with local and regional community groups through organised community engagement exercises.

This year's theme was 'Working Landscapes and Liveable Communities' and the thematic breadth combined with the concentration of scholars meant that you got to attend each session and hear everyone at the conference speak.

Something that at the larger national and international conferences you do not get the chance to do due to overlapping sessions. The fieldtrips and social activities also meant there was a real group feel where you got to speak to everyone and to know many more people than you might otherwise.

Conferences of this size are often rare, or infrequent, so having such a conference now in its ninth iteration is a fantastic opportunity to attend as an early career researcher interested in rural issues. As the collegial environment offered where your work is engaged with by a range of scholars and thus you gain a range of perspectives on your own work. The opportunity for future collaborations now being discussed is something I am particularly looking forward to.

Cheryl Morse and Peter Nelson, in particular, need to be credited for organising: Not just the paper sessions alongside interesting conference fieldtrips, but for also taking it upon themselves to lead future directions for the group for outputs, collaborations involving all members and I look forward to these emerging. We all engaged with local stakeholders in rural Vermont to ask how our international perspectives could be useful to groups in Vermont. **Most notably we had various round-table discussions with groups from the Vermont Community Foundation; American papers can be found online:** <https://blog.uvm.edu/cemorse-ruralquadrennial2019/>

QUAD PARTICIPANTS: 2019

Ryan Bergstrom, University of Minnesota-Duluth, USA
Valentine Cadieux, Hamline University, Minnesota, USA
Alison Caffyn, Cardiff University, Wales, UK
Sara Epp, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada
Ryan Gibson, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada
Nathalie Gravel, Laval University, Quebec, Canada
Keith Halfacree, Swansea University, Wales, UK
Lisa Harrington, Kansas State University, Kansas, USA
Christy Jean, Kansas State University, Kansas, USA
Maria Kennedy, Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA
Nik Luka, McGill University, Quebec, Canada
Felipe da Silva Machado, University of Plymouth, UK
Andrew MacLaren, University of Aberdeen & James Hutton Institute, Scotland, UK
Aimee Morse, University of Birmingham, England, UK
Cheryl Morse, University of Vermont, Vermont, USA
Peter Nelson, Middlebury College, Vermont, USA
Karin Patzke, State University of New York-ESF, USA
Martin Phillips, University of Leicester, England, UK
Avantika Ramekar, Kansas State University, Kansas, USA
Doug Ramsey, Brandon University, Manitoba, Canada

Association of Retired Persons – Vermont, and the Vermont Council on Rural Development. Full details on these groups, the conference, its participants, and I am immensely grateful that the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) Rural Geography Research Group were successful in securing funding for early career researchers and to have received one of these small grants to support attendance at the ninth rural quadrennial. Attending such events is crucial in the development of early career researchers, to continue to develop their research, grow new and continue previous connections with scholars in your area of research. I am delighted I won a grant at this stage of my career for the Ninth Rural Quadrennial Conference. I am looking forward to Canada 2023.

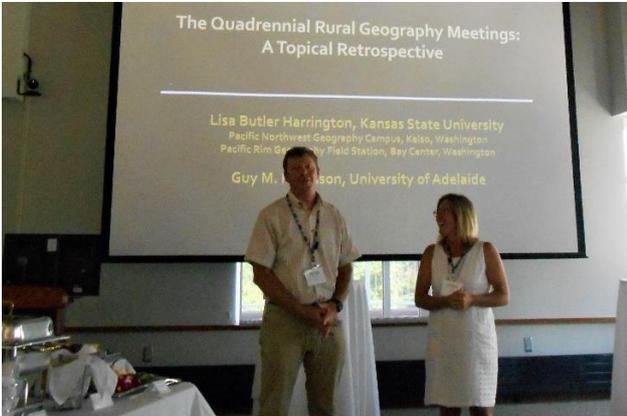
Quadrennial Participants (Full list can be found here: <https://blog.uvm.edu/cemorse-ruralquadrennial2019/2019-participants/>)



Guy Robinson, University of Adelaide, Australia and University of Cambridge, UK
Bruce Scholten, Independent Scholar, UK
Kristin Smith, Montana State University, Montana, USA
Darren Smith, Loughborough University, England, UK
John Smithers, University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada
Tony Sorenson, University of New England, Armidale, Australia
Aileen Stockdale, Queen's Univ, Belfast, No. Ireland, UK
Laura Taylor, York University, Ontario, Canada
Levi Van Sant, Georgia Southern University, Georgia, and George Mason University, Virginia, USA
Bill Wetherholt, Frostburg State University, Maryland, USA
Jeffrey Widener, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma, USA
Michael Woods, Aberystwyth University, Wales, UK
Intern Conference Assistants:
Lucia Possehl, University of Vermont, Vermont, USA
Marco Van Gemeren, Middlebury College, Vermont, USA

2d. Brit-Can-Am Quad Vermont impressions by Bruce Scholten

Like the Brit-Can-Am Quadrennial based in Spokane, Washington State, USA in 2007, the 2019 Vermont Quad mixed academic work with walking in dramatic rural geographical settings. Prof Guy Robinson headed RGRG at the 2007 meet, at the time he was moving from the UK to Australia. It was good that Guy and Australian colleague Tony brought Antipodean perspectives to University of Vermont, and the later settings of Sugarbush Lodge, and the Middlebury Vermont campus. Excellent work by Cheryl Morse, Peter Nelson, and Lucia Possehl.



Quad hosts Doug Ramsey and Cheryl Morse. Thanks!



Back: Ex-RGRG Chair Guy Robinson chats with Lisa Butler Harrington who presented history Brit-Can-Am Quadrennials from 1985. Front: Darren Smith chats with linguist Martha Young-Scholten.



Center for Agri-Ecology officers laud flexibility in rural socio-economic development. Housing, transport and jobs are dear for 20-somethings in tourist areas.



Organiser Doug Ramsey lectures at Uni-Vermont.



Center for Agri-Ecology Vermont local food products.



Laggis Family juggles dairy with nursing.



Sugarbush Maple Farm was a treat. This business is quite old, worth visiting. Vermont sap extraction is not as industrialised as in Canada.

3. MALAWI: From theory & research in rural development, to action with farmers: the case of [Malawi Fruits](#) by Dr. Charles Howie.



Solar pump 2.jpg



Polytunnel 1.jpg



Tupukwa 3.jpg

Malawi, formerly the British Protectorate of Nyasaland, is likely the 4th poorest country in the world. Its government and NGOs have special links to Scotland. This began with Dr David Livingston, the 19th century Scottish missionary and explorer, and later Dr Hastings Banda, a medical doctor who trained in Edinburgh, became an elder of the Church of Scotland, and subsequently first President of the Republic of Malawi, 1964-1994. Many people from Scotland, doctors, missionaries and others had a hand in Malawi's development, but Malawi has not progressed like its neighbours.

After Scotland gained its own parliament, 1999, consent was granted to have an International Development Fund to perform its role as a good global citizen. This has focused primarily on Malawi, but also Zambia, Rwanda and Pakistan, and there are now 500+ Scottish NGOs working in partnership with Malawian organisations. Currently Malawi's population is 18 million, 50% are under the age of 14, but it is projected to reach 29 million by 2034. Thus, urgent attention to food production is needed. Rains only occur between November and April, and in the north vary from 800mm to 1600mm, depending on proximity to Lake Malawi and altitude.

Since 2015, I have been MF's Critical Friend/Technical Adviser, an opportunity to use knowledge and experience from several strands of my life, particularly working with farmers in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam, growing up in Uganda. In 2 visits I've spent about working 30 days in the country, mainly in Mzuzu, and Rhumpi in the north. On my second visit I worked with all our staff to develop an Environmental Policy, one owned by staff, and not parachuted in. We are a Scottish NGO, we have a partner Malawian NGO and a trading company—appropriately named Modern Farming Technology, because we aim to raise farmers' asset base, and output, by improving how they farm. We are not a donor charity. We do not give things, instead we have 'rent to buy schemes' where, with careful extension work and appropriate crops,

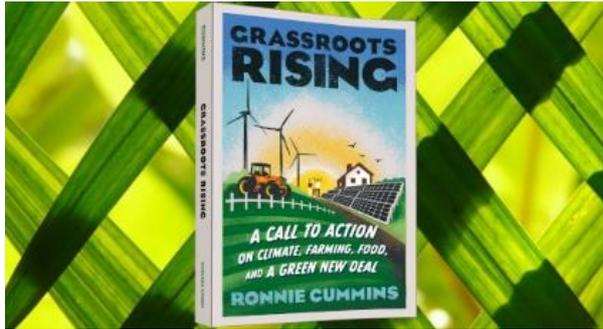
we help farmers buy technical assets for crops. The 'rent to buy' scheme helps farmers purchase solar powered water pumps, called Future Pumps. After paying an initial 10% deposit farmers grow crops after training and under continuing guidance (farm extension), repaying the rest over three crops. These pumps lift/push water up seven metres, at 3,600 litres/hour. Funds come from UNDP, The Guild (women's organization of the Church of Scotland) and Rotary clubs. So far nearly 200 pumps have been taken up; with a rolling fund this could extend into the future.

Tomatoes are a key part of daily food, along with onions and Nsima, a porridge made from maize flour. Yet the fruit quality is poor, post-harvest losses are high and plants do not fruit in the rainy season. Following discussions with a wide range of stakeholders, including a large group of women, and finding a buyer who needs fruit for processing, we launched a scheme for groups of 3 or 4 women, also people with disabilities, to purchase metal framed polytunnels (controlled environment agri-culture, or CEA) for raising two crops of better quality tomatoes a year, grown in sacks, again with training and support. Funding has come from several sources, including the Scottish Government, which also just approved an innovative project to store tomatoes in a solar powered cool produce store, 8 degrees centigrade, to extend shelf up to 3 weeks, rather than just several days, and by aggregating fruit into larger amounts, attract larger buyers and caterers. For this last project we also consulted two of Scotland's foremost CAE growers, one of whom grew tomatoes in a 4-acre glasshouse, the other soft fruits.

Malawi Fruits will soon complete a small hydro project, part of the restoration of an abandoned EU funded irrigation project, on 27 hectares for year-round growth, generating electricity to recharge 12-volt batteries for home lighting in 80+ households and, by ultraviolet light purification, provide clean, safe drinking water for hundreds of people. A new resource will be a centre with TV, education and training materials. This community will be yet another beneficiary of Scottish funders, particularly the Scottish Government and the Church of Scotland.

RGRG member Dr. Charles Howie taught decades at RAU.

5. BOOKS: RGRG Newsletter welcomes book reviewers!



GRASSROOTS RISING: A Call to Action on Climate, Farming, Food, and a Green New Deal

By Ronnie Cummins

Published Feb 11, 2020

Available from Amazon & indie bookshops.

Anyone researching calls for a Green New Deal in US politics – as championed by young New York Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, and allies like presidential candidate Senator Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, might consider this book.

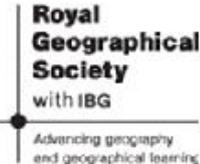
Author Ronnie Cummins is the long-time head of the Organic Consumers Association. Along with Cornucopia Institute, and Organic Eye, OCA has been called a trustworthy guard dog for family-scale farming, environment and animal welfare. Cummins advocates a return to focus on soil, akin to that of the UK Soil Association, the Rodale Institute in USA, as well as world umbrella, the International Federation of Organic Agricultural Movements (IFOAM).

Cummins attacks what he calls a Poison Cartel, whose associated illnesses, he claims, have already claimed the lives of too many of his contemporaries. The usual suspects are 'Bayer/ Monsanto, Dow-DuPont, Syngenta/ChemChina, ExxonMobil, BP, Koch Industries, Halliburton, and all the rest—a cartel that, as you probably know, has polluted not only my hometown but the entire world.' Activist Vandana Shiva says: 'This is a book that should be in the hands of every activist working on food and farming, climate change and the Green New Deal.'

Postgraduates wanting to get published might be wise to submit book reviews to this and other journals.



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Advancing geography
and geographical learning



RGRG Newsletter Archive: www.dur.ac.uk/geography/rgrg/