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### 1. CALENDAR OF FORTHCOMING RURAL CONFERENCES & EVENTS

Date	Event	Contact
5-9 April, 2005	AAG 2005, Denver, Colorado.	<a href="http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings">http://www.aag.org/annualmeetings</a>
31 August - 2 September, 2005	Royal Geographical Society With The Institute Of British Geographers Annual Conference, Royal Geographical Society, London, 2005. "Flows And Spaces In A Globalised World".	<a href="http://www.rgs.org/category.php?Page=mainevents">http://www.rgs.org/category.php?Page=mainevents</a> See pages 13-17.

### 2. CHARTERED GEOGRAPHER

Chartered Geographer (CGeog) is the professional status qualification for those who can demonstrate competence, experience and professionalism in the use of geographical knowledge or skills in the workplace, and who are committed to maintaining their professional standards through ongoing continuing professional development (CPD).

Why become a Chartered Geographer?: CGeog is the only internationally recognised professional accreditation for geographers.

- The accreditation has been approved by the Privy Council and is on a par with those offered by other professional bodies.
- It recognises your experience and commitment to geography and your achievement professionally within the discipline.
- It demonstrates your commitment to maintaining professional standards through continually updating and developing your geographical skills and knowledge.

How do I maintain standards?: As a CGeog you will be selecting, undertaking and briefly reporting annually on your chosen programme of CPD.

- A wide range of CPD activities are eligible, including those you currently undertake such as participation in conferences and workshops, training courses, journal and other publications, private study, and website and intranet development. Examples of CPD activities are provided for CGeogs on the website.
- You may, if you wish, become a mentor for those early in their careers aspiring to CGeog status.

How do I apply?: Application forms can be downloaded from the Chartered Geographer web pages: [www.rgs.org/charteredstatus](http://www.rgs.org/charteredstatus). The website also provides a list of requirements for validation as a CGeog and other information pertaining to the award. If you have questions, please email the Professional Officer on [rhed@rgs.org](mailto:rhed@rgs.org)

#### Requirements

- Applicants must be a Fellow of the Society.
- Application must be complete and consist of Application Form, CV, Professional Report, Supporting References and the Application Fee.
- Applicants must hold either an Honours degree or BEd in Geography, or have completed a degree that has a minimum 60% geography content to the satisfaction of the Society's Council.
- Applicants must be able to demonstrate at least 6 years of experience in using geographical knowledge and skills in the workplace since graduation.

Applications take approximately 10 weeks to be processed as this involves external assessment by a peer panel of assessors and final approval by the Society's Council. If you are not currently a Fellow of the Society, you may apply for Fellowship at the same time as the application for CGeog status. Fellowship application forms can be found on [www.rgs.org/membership](http://www.rgs.org/membership).

### **3. RGRG POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE**

I was elected as the new Rural Geography Research Group (RGRG) postgrad rep at the IBG conference in Glasgow last month, taking over from Jessica Sellick. As I understand it, my main role as postgrad rep (along with Matthew Offord, also pg rep) is to organise next year's rural postgraduate session and to attend RGRG meetings. The postgrad sessions organised by Jessica this year were very good and well supported, so hopefully we can achieve the same next year! If you have any comments/issues/ideas that you want me to raise with the RGRG committee drop me a line and I will do so.

I am also aware that the email list I have prepared is likely to miss out other rural postgrads. If you know of anyone doing a R/rural PhD/MSc drop me a line with their details and I can add them to the list.

Damian Maye, Geography, Coventry University ([d.maye@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:d.maye@coventry.ac.uk))

### **4. RGRG MASTERS DISSERTATION PRIZE 2003**

Mitchell, Jonathon (UCL) 'Quasi-rights and legal responsibilities: the changing place of landed property rights under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000'.

Jonathon's dissertation was concerned with the relationship between public and private, as revealed within the institution of property rights. A specific piece of legislation – the CRoW Act – is used as a vehicle to examine these issues. The dissertation weaves together three bodies of literature: social theory on public / private; legal geography; and property rights, to demonstrate the relationality of property. Evidence is drawn from secondary sources, notably the Parliamentary record relating to the development of the CRoW Act, to reveal how this legislation promotes a hybridisation of the public / private and a private contract of legality, whilst drawing upon public (legal) sanctions. This, it is argued, is likely to diminish collective experience.

The assessors judged this thesis to be written in a mature and thoroughly critical way. It demonstrated a highly innovative combining of conceptual material which was convincingly applied to the analysis of secondary data. The depth, clarity and incisiveness of the argument were also notable.

Carol Morris, University of Exeter

## **5. RECENT CONFERENCE REPORTS**

### **5.1 SECOND MEETING OF ANGLO-GERMAN RURAL GEOGRAPHERS RURAL MULTI-FUNCTIONALITY: PERSPECTIVES FROM POLICY- MAKING, IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICE, UNIVERSITY OF EXETER, 3 – 6 JULY, 2004**

Over the first weekend of July, some 25 rural researchers from Britain and Germany gathered together at the Centre for Rural Research, the University of Exeter in what was the second RGRG Anglo-German meeting. Co-organised by Doris Schmied of the University of Bayreuth (who hosted the first meeting some 2 years ago), Henry Buller of the University of Exeter and Olivia Wilson, the meeting took as its theme, the issue of rural multifunctionality. Some 17 papers were given ranging from examples of rural multifunctionality, such as tourism, quality food networks, farm building conversions, suburban extension and demographic shifts to conceptual interrogations of the concept of, and resistance to, multifunctionality. A one-day field trip took participants to the edges of Dartmoor and included a number of farm visits. The conference closed with an assessment of the pertinence, use and validity of the concept of multifunctionality and how it differs (paradigmatically or otherwise), if at all, as well as where it differs, from traditional notions of co-production and sustainability.

Henry Buller, University of Exeter.

### **5.2 WORLD CONGRESS OF RURAL SOCIOLOGY, TRONDHEM, 25-30 JULY, 2004**

#### **'Back-to-the-land' in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The XI<sup>st</sup> World Congress of Rural Sociology, held in the Norwegian city of Trondheim in July 2004, brought together a wide range of rural researchers from across the world. Besides a number of plenary addresses and

symposia, the bulk of the conference was organised around Working Groups. The one I convened, number 24, aimed to explore the characteristics, motivations, actions, consequences and theoretical significance for rural studies – and, of course, for the countryside – of people moving to live in rural environments who fit poorly with both ‘mainstream’ counterurbanisers and conventional agriculturalists. Inevitably, we covered this ground unevenly but each contribution provided valuable and often fascinating insights into the back-to-the-land phenomenon today. This was helped by the friendly atmosphere and willingness to ask questions of one another that pervaded the session. On top of this, I would like to thank our Norwegian hosts for making the conference go so smoothly, and for organising an excellent walk in the woods on our day off!

Of the ten speakers (three others were unfortunately unable to make it) in the Working Group, all but one drew on either European or North American material. Attention was given to two main issues: the lives and experiences of ‘new’ or ‘alternative’ farmers, and the values and meanings expressed through a rural residential existence.

First up was Sofie Nousiainen (University of Helsinki), who reported on the families moving out from the Helsinki region to surrounding municipalities due to the ‘pull’ of ‘country living’ and the ‘push’ of high house prices. Attention was given to the ways that these newcomers are bringing about an ethnic, socio-economic and cultural restructuring of the areas moved into. Sofie was followed by Maria Jesus Rivera Escribano (University of Wales Swansea), who took this deconstruction of counterurbanisation further in her examination of contrasting strands of migrants to rural Navarra, Spain. Motivations for moving, subsequent lifestyles, etc. showed that many of migrants fit poorly into the counterurban stereotype. After coffee, we looked in more detail at some of the experiences of living in a rural environment. Johan Fredrik Rye (Centre for Rural Research, Trondheim) focused on the images of the rural held by Norwegian rural teenagers, revealing a range of contrasting and even contradictory representations. Next up was Barbro Vartdal (Møre Research, Volda, Norway) who, in a more conceptual paper, discussed the balance between ‘freedom’ and ‘limitations’ that exists within what she called rural living in late modernity.

The next day’s session focused first on the agricultural sector. Juri Hara-Fukuyo (National Agricultural Research Centre, Ibaraki, Japan) drew out the issue of gender in her dissection of the support networks available and drawn upon by new women farmers originating from Japan’s non-agricultural sector. This issue of networks, vital for sustaining these agricultural newcomers, was also central to Kate Mailfert’s (ENSAT, France) comparative look at new farmers in France and the USA. This revealed a number of interesting similarities and differences between the two contexts. We stayed in the USA and with the importance of developing networks with Amy Trauger’s (Pennsylvania State University) contribution, which focused on farmers employing sustainable agricultural practices in Pennsylvania. As with most contributions, Amy also drew out just how practically challenging adopting a ‘back-to-the-land’ lifestyle can be.

In the final three papers, a more explicitly counter-cultural emphasis came through. Keith Halfacree (University of Wales Swansea) gave an overview of the evolution of 'alternative' back-to-the-land migration in Britain, focusing on a comparison between the 1960s / 1970s and present-day initiatives. This was followed by Louise Meijering's (University of Groningen) discussion of intentional communities in rural space, which profiled these groupings in terms of their characteristics, ideologies, motivations, etc. Finally, Darren Smith (University of Brighton) explored an interesting case-study of what he termed 'back-to-the-waters'. This was a group of 'alternative' people living in house boats in the Shoreham Estuary near Brighton in southern England.

Finally, as the Working Group worked so well and suggested a high degree of mutual interest, it was decided to try to set up a fairly informal 'back-to-the-land' network, to communicate amongst those interested. This will initially be in the form of an email group. We are keen to have as many join-up as possible and if anyone reading this has *any* interest at all in any of the topics covered above (see also [www.irsa-world.org](http://www.irsa-world.org)) they are invited to join. Just send me an email at [k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk).

Keith Halfacree, Department of Geography, University of Wales Swansea.

### **5.3 RGS-IBG ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE WORLD INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC UNION (IGU) CONFERENCE, GLASGOW 15-20 AUGUST, 2004**

#### **Critical Reflections on Theory in Rural Geography**

In conjunction with the C00.21 Sustainability of Rural Systems group of the International Geographical Union, I organised, on behalf of the Rural Geography Research Group, a session at the Glasgow IGC-RGS conference in August 2004 that reflected, 24 years on, whether rural studies still has the 'Cinderella complex' attributed to it by Paul Cloke in 1980. From this session's contributors and the healthy audience that they attracted, this clearly seems not to be the case. However, although Cinderella does seem to have now made it to the theory ball, the new friends 'she' has made as a result always need careful scrutiny. This came through in the papers presented.

It seemed entirely appropriate that Paul Cloke (University of Bristol) should kick off proceedings, not only because he could reflect a little on what he said in 1980 but also because his paper also cautioned us absorbing the vagaries of 'theory' too uncritically. With a special emphasis on the 'cultural turn', Paul rejected 'rural turns' of theory for the sake of it and instead advocated a more relaxed engagement with the rich range of 'theory' open to us. Martin Phillips (Leicester University) maintained a cultural perspective, with a paper that built on much of his recent work to examine the changing cultural imaginations that permeate rural geography. The multiplicity of what is meant by 'culture' was a key theme. The Scottish crofting communities are a group for whom 'culture' has been of key explicit political significance for many years. How they have sought to (re)negotiate their sense of identity and its link to the land, in the context of the recent 'community buy-outs' of their estates, for example, was the theme of Fiona Mackenzie's (Carleton University, Canada) paper. Finally

before the break, Yasutaka Matsuo (Senshu University, Japan) summarised two papers. The first mapped the influence of Paul Cloke's various influential contributions within rural studies across the 'developed' world. The second paper showed how Yasutaka had brought theoretical concepts into analysis of the place of 'commons' within practices of sustainable development.

After a very cursory interval, we had two further papers. First up was Rob Burton (Macauley Land Use Research Institute, Scotland) who, in a very visual contribution, brought our attention to a somewhat unfashionable branch of theory, behaviouralism. Rob argued that this theory, still widely used and regarded as having much explanatory potential, needs to be brought up to date through stirring into its analytical frame the growing recognition of the influence of culture on agricultural behaviour. Finally, Geoff Wilson (Plymouth University) argued against the commonplace, if all too often oversimplified, idea that agriculture in Britain and many other developed nations has entered a 'post-productivist' phase. Instead, Geoff recognised the rise of a more multifunctional regime, which has within it still a very clear place for 'productivist' forms.

Overall, I found this to be an excellent session and it is to be hoped that these contributions will be published as quickly as possible. Whilst the session covered fairly diverse ground, I think that this reflects in part the maturity with which rural studies has embraced 'theory' in all of its branches. Finally, though, having a session – any session but especially one with 'theory' in the title! – at 7.30 in the morning was far from ideal and my thanks go out not just to the speakers, who were all wide awake and eager to present, but also to those in the audience who managed to get to the conference venue at that early hour!

Keith Halfacree, Department of Geography, University of Wales Swansea.

## **Sustainable Rural Systems**

Three well-attended sessions at the Glasgow IGC were held jointly between the RGRG and the Sustainability of Rural Systems Group of the IGU. The sessions focused on the interaction of the three main dimensions of sustainable development: economy, society and environment, with a series of case studies drawn primarily from the UK, though also including papers drawing upon research in Canada, Ireland and the EU. Themes addressed included globalisation and re-regulation of sustainable food production, links between conservation and sustainability, the development of sustainable rural communities, sustainable rural-urban interactions, and issues of sustainability as applied to issues of social welfare, exclusion, employment and provision of rural services.

The opening session, chaired by *Henry Buller*, began with a timely reminder ahead of the case studies, that theoretical dimensions of rural change necessarily underpin and shape the research agenda. *Mark Tilzey* and *Clive Potter* (Imperial College London) provided a lucid critique of post-productivism, extending a debate that had occurred at an earlier session organised by the RGRG. Various limitations of the conceptualisation of post-

productivism were identified within the broader context of addressing post-Fordist agricultural transitions. The paper provided scope for consideration of macro-level 'drivers' to agricultural change (and sustainable development) emanating from the World Trade Organisation and the various agencies of the European Union. Evolving relationships between the Developed and Developing Worlds within the context of multilateral trade negotiations were considered as part of the multi-faceted transitions affecting agriculture and the broader agro-food sector. Issues regarding the recognition of and nature of these transitions provided scope for a series of questions for the ensuing case studies to address.

The rest of the first session had a Canadian dimension with papers from *Scott Prudham* and *Angela Morris* (Toronto) and *Guy Robinson* (Kingston, UK) both focusing on aspects of sustainability within a Canadian context. Prudham and Morris focused on the work of the Canadian Biotechnology Advisory Committee and the relationship between the Committee's decisions and the adoption of new biotechnology within Canadian agriculture. This highlighted the important role of government in setting an agenda on issues such as genetically modified (GM) crops/foods. Clear contrasts could be observed between the public reactions to GM debates in North America and that in the UK. Robinson's paper brought together research on two different examples of 'environmental' projects, the Atlantic Coastal Action Program (ACAP) in thirteen areas of the Atlantic provinces, and the Ontario Environmental Farm Plan (EFP). A fundamental question addressed was the extent to which the two schemes contributed to increased sustainability. Various environmental benefits were identified and the key role of voluntary community participation was addressed. The 'round table' stakeholder approach of ACAP underwritten by support from a government agency, Environment Canada, was compared with the farmer-controlled EFP, also supported with federal government funds. Key findings related to the nature of participation, the identification of environmental gains and the nature of broader links from the programs to sustainability.

The second session, chaired by *Geoff Wilson*, involved four case studies primarily from the UK, though with a EU dimension to the first paper, from *Moya Kneafsey*, *Lewis Holloway*, *Laura Venn* and *Richard Cox* (Coventry). This reported on the initial stages of an EU-funded research project on alternative food networks. Drawing upon examples from various parts of the EU, the paper considered the relationship between 'reconnection' of consumers to local agri-food production and the establishment of more sustainable production systems. Both theoretical and practical issues relating to reconnection were addressed, with examples ranging from women's co-operative vegetable production on small allotments to an Italian 'adopt-a-sheep' scheme. The nature of the link between 'local' production and consumption was a central theme in the narrative, which addressed the ways in which different discourses and practices of sustainability are constituted.

*Carol Morris* and *Henry Buller* (Exeter) provided further questions regarding the nature of agricultural production within the context of sustainable systems. Their focus was on the role of animals in such systems, raising basic ethical issues regarding the treatment of farm animals. Several fundamental issues were addressed regarding the place of farm animals within conceptualisations

of rurality and sustainability, notably the contradictions inherent in the need for farm animals to retain an economic status if their biological and genetic diversity is to be retained. They argued this contradiction implied a need for a reconfiguration of the classic three-point configuration of rural sustainability.

*Lois Mansfield* (Central Lancashire) reported on the impacts of the Fell Farming Traineeship Scheme (FFTS) in Cumbria. She highlighted the many problems facing upland agriculture in the UK and the urgent need to maintain upland farming systems if sustainable rural communities are to be maintained. As part of a wider sustainable upland management project in Cumbria, the FFTS addresses the lack of young farmers in the region. It is endeavouring to encourage young people to take up a farming career through provision of training and retaining traditional expertise that will disappear if a new generation of farmers is not forthcoming. Initial successes and failures of the scheme were reported, with indications of the potential for extending it more widely in the region.

Finally, *Isabel Ross, Frances Harris, Guy Robinson and Nigel Walford* (Kingston) looked at the fate of organic farming, so often closely identified with 'alternative' and sustainable agriculture. Drawing on detailed interviews with a small sample of farmers in southern England, the paper focused on farmers who had quit organic farming. The reasons for leaving this type of production were analysed, with consideration of the implications for future promotion of organic farming. The diversity of reasons for quitting was linked to a similar diversity of reasons for taking up organic farming in the first place. Although economic motivations were strongly identified, relationships with providers of advice and certification were often found to be significant in the decision to quit.

The final session, chaired by *Guy Robinson*, included three case studies from three different countries. The first, from *Mary Cawley* (National University of Ireland, Galway), moved the focus away from agriculture and onto tourism. Specifically, it looked at research on integrated tourism, conducted as part of an EU-funded project. Integrated tourism was defined as tourism directly tied into the natural, cultural, economic and social resources of areas where it was located, in this case in western Ireland. The paper examined the extent of integration, based on measurement of key criteria, using a variety of source information that including in-depth interviews with key actors in the local tourist industry. The importance of the different perspectives of these actors was emphasised in terms of the potential contribution of tourists to sustainable rural development across a broad range of economic, social and cultural indicators.

*Irene Evison* (Rural Resources Ltd., Welshpool) brought a practitioner and policy developer's perspective to the Conference in addressing the policy dimensions of rural sustainability. The paper drew upon a range of case studies in Wales, examining the ways in which funding bodies make a contribution to the development of sustainable communities via their interventions. The paper asked a number of questions about the selected schemes, notably how the various interventions can be measured through performance indicators. The role of volunteers from the community in this monitoring process was raised - a recurrent theme in several of the papers.



The paper concluded that lessons from the experience of the various Welsh schemes could be applied elsewhere, though Wales had a particular position in the search for sustainable development, given the strong commitment from the Welsh Assembly Government.

The final paper of the day, from *Christopher Short* (Gloucestershire), looked at how high value nature conservation sites in England could play various roles. The focus here was upon common land designated primarily for nature conservation, but which fulfilled multiple functions relating to low-intensity agricultural production, recreation, heritage, landscape and socio-cultural identity. Balancing these different functions implied a complex set of management choices, which were investigated for selected sites in southern England. The methods by which managers chose their strategies for such sites were discussed against the background of the need to deliver a 'conservation benefit' (as a broader contributor to sustainability).

Overall, the papers drew upon a number of common themes (e.g. community participation, sustainability indicators, economic viability) and provoked discussions that reflected the 'slippery' and highly problematic nature of the term 'sustainability' whilst revealing a multi-faceted array of research on topics related to this concept which is now so readily embraced in the policy arena. It is hoped that in due course a collection of the papers from these three sessions will be published as a monograph.

Guy Robinson, Kingston University

### **New and Emerging Researchers in Rural Geography**

These sessions were designed to provide postgraduate students currently engaged in rural research with an opportunity to present theoretical, empirical and/or practical findings from their work. The sessions attracted a broad range of papers from researchers working in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia.

Papers in the first session on 'Contested Ruralities' challenged assumptions and knowledges of the 'rural' and embraced ideas of multiple and competing rural identities. The session began with a paper from Karen Parkhill (Cardiff University) who illustrated the fragility of rural development alliances, drawing upon a case study of the development of wind farms in the Cairngorms National Park, Scotland. This paper was followed by Amanda Davies (University of New England) who presented empirical findings from her doctoral research comparing small towns in Australia and putting forward reasons that may account for their thriving or declining economies. The first session ended with a paper by Jonathan Mitchell (University College London) who discussed public access to the countryside and, in particular, how theoretical concepts of hybridity may offer new understandings of the 'public' and 'private'. As a group, the three papers in this session engaged with a diverse range of themes relating to rural geography including power, governance, otherness, environmental conflict and conservation.

Contributors to the second paper session on 'Food Networks' focussed on the changing nature of food production, promotion and consumption. Two of the papers pursued issues relating to organic farming. Bruce Scholten (University of Durham), for example, explored consumer attitudes and behaviour towards organic, local and genetically modified foodstuffs in Newcastle and Seattle. Genevieve Groom (University of Gloucestershire), on the other hand, drew attention to the gendered nature of organic farming and its relationship to agro-industrial models of agriculture. The remaining two papers explored the role of food supply chains. Jane Ricketts Hein's (Coventry University) presentation highlighted how issues such as infrastructure, tourism and an agricultural base impacted upon the development of local food supply systems in Cornwall. In comparison, Damian Maye's (Coventry University) paper concentrated on livestock producers in the Scottish-English borders and offered critical reflections on socio-spatial understandings of alternative food economies. Taken as a collective, all of the papers in this session explored how food is simultaneously economic, political, cultural, social and biological.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the postgraduate students who contributed papers, Dr Annie Hughes, Professor Henry Buller, the Rural Geography Research Group who kindly sponsored these sessions and Dr Lorraine Craig of the Royal Geographical Society.

Jessica Sellick, School of Geographical Sciences, University of Bristol.

## **6. FORTHCOMING RURAL CONFERENCES AND EVENTS**

### **6.1 SESSIONS AT THE AAG 2005, DENVER, COLORADO, 5-9 APRIL, 2005**

#### **Representing the Global Countryside**

This session seeks to explore the politics, practices and geographies of representing contemporary rural localities and their experiences of change under advanced globalisation. Rural localities around the world have experienced considerable change in recent years, influenced by processes of advanced globalisation. These include not only processes of economic globalisation – the development of the global market in agricultural trade and the rise of transnational corporations, for example – but also the globalisation of mobility – including the mobility of migrant workers and long-haul tourists – and processes of cultural globalisation, such as the growth of global media and the imposition of universal environmental values over locally-embedded moralities. Each of these processes have contributed to a restructuring of rural societies, economies and lifestyles, but they have also provoked resistance and the re-assertion of local identities. A focus on practices of representation can help us to analyse change in rural localities by addressing questions about:

- How the reproduction of processes of globalisation, and responses to globalisation, are informed by representations of the rural in the mass media.

- How the impact of globalisation on rural localities has altered the ways in which the rural is represented in policy discourses and political rhetoric.
- How alternative representations of rural life and the experience of change have been produced by rural communities themselves as part of a cultural strategy of resistance to globalisation.

The session organisers have invited proposals for papers that present research falling within this broad theme. In particular, papers that examine:

- Community-based initiatives to record and represent experiences of rural change through film, art or other media.
- Representations of the contemporary countryside in the mass media, including factual and fictional films, television documentaries, dramas, lifestyle and 'reality' programmes.
- The representation of experiences of rural change through art, film, photography and literature.
- The representation of rural change and globalisation in policy discourses and political rhetoric.
- News media reporting of rural issues and the effect of processes of globalisation on rural localities.
- Lifestyle magazines, books and self-help manuals offering advice to rural in-migrants or to communities seeking to respond to rural change and globalisation.
- The use of the internet and other new technologies to produce and disseminate alternative representations of rural change and organise resistance to globalisation.

Session Organisers: Deborah Dixon, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Aberystwyth, SY23 3DB, UK. E-mail: [dxd@aber.ac.uk](mailto:dxd@aber.ac.uk) and Michael Woods, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, University of Wales Aberystwyth, Aberystwyth, SY23 3DB, UK. E-mail: [m.woods@aber.ac.uk](mailto:m.woods@aber.ac.uk)

## Political Economy of Organic Food Supply Chains

The new agricultural paradigm of post-productivism places an emphasis on "local" production and consumption of organic foods, but the increasing global demand for organic food and the changing regulatory environments within the nation-state have had the effect of extending the reach of organic food supply chains. This session proposes to explore the historical context and contemporary changes in organic food production at a variety of scales and through a diversity of lenses.

Potential topics include theorising "scale" as it relates to organic production, distribution and consumption; the "local" impact of spatially extended supply chains; the relationships between new regulatory environments and global organic supply chains; discourses, ideology and material practices around sustainability and organic production; discussions of marketing strategies employed by organic producers including wholesale, retailing, and/or cooperatives; and/or the proliferation of "risk" through spatially extended supply chains.

Organisers: Amy Trauger (email: [akt122@psu.edu](mailto:akt122@psu.edu)), Andrew Murphy (email: [a.murphy@bham.ac.uk](mailto:a.murphy@bham.ac.uk)), Markus Hassler (email: [markus.hassler@ruhr-uni-bochum.de](mailto:markus.hassler@ruhr-uni-bochum.de)).

Amy Trauger, Department of Geography, 302 Walker Building, Penn State University, University Park, PA 16802, FAX: 814-863-7943, email: [akt122@psu.edu](mailto:akt122@psu.edu).

## 6.2 THE HISTORY OF GARDENS AND LANDSCAPES SEMINARS

All are welcome at the autumn term's series of seminars which are held on alternate Fridays, 5.30 in the Wolfson Room, Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, Malet Street, London. The theme of this series is 'The Small Man's Garden'.

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 15 October  | The Gardens of Stuart London.<br>David Marsh, Birkbeck, University of London.  |
| 29 October  | Nineteenth Century Rural Allotments.<br>Dr Jeremy Burchardt, University of Reading.  |
| 12 November | The New Arrivals: the Hackney Gardens of Charles and Walter Butters c 1875.<br>Christine Lalumia, Deputy Director of the Geffrye Museum. |
| 26 November | The Art of the Small Garden.<br>Dr Nicholas Alfrey, University of Nottingham.  |
| 10 December | From Shirley Hibberd to World War I: the Gardens of London's Suburbs.<br>Dr Rebecca Preston, Geffrye Museum.                             |

For further information contact Dr Janet Waymark:  
[janetwaymark@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janetwaymark@yahoo.co.uk) or Dr Alan Powers: [pasquito@aol.com](mailto:pasquito@aol.com)  
More information can be found about seminars at the IHR at:  
[www.history.ac.uk/ihrseminars/gardens.htm/](http://www.history.ac.uk/ihrseminars/gardens.htm/)

### **6.3 CALL FOR PAPERS: ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY WITH THE INSTITUTE OF BRITISH GEOGRAPHERS ANNUAL CONFERENCE, ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY, LONDON, 2005. "FLOWS AND SPACES IN A GLOBALISED WORLD". 31 AUGUST - 2 SEPTEMBER, 2005.**

The RGRG are involved in organising six separate sessions at the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers Annual Conference in London in September, 2005. These are outlined below. If you are interested in submitting a paper, please contact the relevant convenors with your expression of interest.

The deadline for abstracts is Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2005. Abstracts should be 150 words long and include up to three key words.

#### **1. RGRG Sponsored Session**

##### **Title of Session: Rural Dwelling / Country Dwellings**

A central theme in the work of the leading 20<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher Martin Heidegger was that of dwelling, understood as 'to reside or to stay, to dwell at peace, to be content or at home in a place' (Urry, 2000:131). He lamented how, in modern society, people no longer dwell in an authentic sense in the world. More optimistically, though, he felt that this dislocation was not necessarily irreversible if a greater sense of 'co-responsibility' between humans and non-human 'nature' re-emerges in the production process (Bonnett, 2003), for example.

The aim of this session is to examine the extent to which rurality and rural places today are associated with dwelling. It seeks to explore – at the conceptual, perceptual and/or lived dimensions – the extent to which rural places facilitate a sense of dwelling. Inter-linked questions that we may seek to address in the session include:

- To what extent does a desire for a sense of dwelling underpin the 'lure of the countryside' that is so commonplace in richer countries?
- How are rural place and their diverse components (house, animals, settlements, etc.) implicated in producing a sense of dwelling?
- What is the role and character of embodied practices in facilitating a sense of emotional engagement with 'nature'?
- How do villages and rural houses – country dwellings – gather together the elements that espouse rural dwelling?
- What forces are undermining any rural sense of authentic dwelling today?
- Are rural places able to transcend the somewhat essentialist and nostalgic sense of authenticity that Heidegger seemed to imbue them with?
- Can we avoid reactionary nostalgia in promoting a renewed concern with dwelling through a critical reading of rural life?
- How useful are the ideas of Heidegger and related thinkers (e.g. Henri Lefebvre on alienation) to help our understanding of the enduring appeal of things rural?

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenor:

Dr Keith Halfacree, Department of Geography, University of Wales, Swansea,  
Singleton Park, Swansea, SA2 8PP.UK.  
Tel: 01792-205678 x4500  
Email: [k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:k.h.halfacree@swansea.ac.uk)

## **2. RGRG Sponsored Session**

### **Session Title: Constructing 'alternative' food systems? Actors, discourses and representation**

Since the late 1990s, agri-food scholars have identified the emergence of 'alternative' food systems offering potential to re-configure contemporary food provision around more economically just, ethically sound and ecologically sustainable relationships between food producers, processors and consumers. Largely in the context of developed market economies, notions of 'relocalisation' and the 'quality turn' have figured prominently in these 'new' agro-food trajectories. Emerging empirical research, however, is now problematising some of the assumptions and terminologies embedded within academic discourses of 'alternative' food systems. Conceptually, calls have been made for a move away from production-centred, broadly political economy analyses, towards theorisations encompassing the cultures, sociologies and politics of consumption. Within this context, we seek papers that address the following inter-linked questions:

How can 'alternative' food systems be conceptualised? What is their relationship with conventional systems? How useful is the concept of 'alternative' in this context?

What discourses, representations and practices are involved in the construction of 'alternative' food systems?

What critical insights can be gained from the perspectives of the multiple actors involved in constructing 'alternative' food systems (e.g. producers, retailers, consumers, institutions, activists)?

What is the significance of different developmental, institutional, socio-cultural and geographical contexts for the construction of 'alternative' food systems?

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenors:

Dr Moya Kneafsey, Dr Lewis Holloway and Damien Maye, Geography Subject Group, School of Science and the Environment, James Starley Building, Coventry University, Priory St, Coventry, CV1 5FB  
Tel. 024 7688 8159  
E-mail: [m.kneafsey@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:m.kneafsey@coventry.ac.uk)

## **3. RGRG Sponsored Session**

### **Session Title: New and Emerging Researchers in Rural Geography**

The aim of this session is to provide a supportive forum for postgraduate students currently engaged in rural research to present their ideas and findings. The convenors strongly encourage contributions from all stages of the research process. Papers may therefore cover any aspect of rural geography and may address theoretical, empirical and/or methodological issues related to their work.

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenors:

Damian Maye, Geography Subject Group, School of Science and the Environment, James Starley Building, Coventry University, Priory St, Coventry, CV1 5FB  
Email: [d.maye@coventry.ac.uk](mailto:d.maye@coventry.ac.uk)

Matthew Offord, Department of Geography, King's College London, Strand,  
London. WC2R 2LS.

Email: [matthew.offord@bbc.co.uk](mailto:matthew.offord@bbc.co.uk)

#### **4. RGRG Co-Sponsored Session with the Political Geography Research Group**

##### **Session Title: Power in the Countryside**

This session aims to explore aspects of power relations, power structures and power conflicts in rural societies. It will revisit some of the key concerns of the political economy approach within rural geography, including class relations, property & the role of the state, but will also draw in perspectives based on post-structuralist theories of power. Papers are invited on any topic related to power and rural society, including rural community power and leadership, governance and participation, citizenship and community empowerment, labour and property relations and rural conflicts and resistance.

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenors:

Dr Michael Woods, Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences, The University of Wales, Aberystwyth, Llandinum Building, Penglais Campus, Aberystwyth, Ceredigion SY23 3DB, Wales, UK.

Tel. 01970 622589

E-mail: [zzp@aber.ac.uk](mailto:zzp@aber.ac.uk)

Dr Henry Buller, Lafrowda House, St. German's Road, Exeter, Devon, England. EX46TL.

Telephone: 01392 263846

E-mail: [h.buller@ex.ac.uk](mailto:h.buller@ex.ac.uk)

#### **5. RGRG Co-Sponsored Session with the Planning and Environment Research Group**

##### **Session Title: Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and the Future of Rural Spaces**

Although public controversies over the introduction of GMOs in the form of seeds, crops and animals have died down in recent years, these new developments will continue to have major implications for rural spaces. Many commentators have posited an explicit tension between the type of high tech, intensive agriculture (epitomised by the adoption of GMOs) and the rural development/multifunctional land use direction proposed by Marsden and others, and examined in a large range of studies on organics, short-food chains, quality food production etc. However, an argument could also be made that GMOs are not inherently inconsistent with the rural development model: Are they necessarily 'high tech and intensive'? Does adoption of GM technology secure or undermine rural futures? This session aims to investigate these questions through a mix of a panel discussion and a more open call for papers.

The call for papers for Block 2 would include topics such as: farmer responses, environmental impacts, consumer resistance/support, the role of supermarkets, government policy – towards biotechnology generally, as well as specifically agricultural biotech, questions of risk, liability and regulation, community participation/debates. Alternately, papers could address broader themes including agricultural transformation, governance, supply chain relationships and international trade.

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenors:

Professor David Gibbs, Department of Geography University of Hull,  
Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX  
Tel: 01482 465330  
E-mail: [d.c.gibbs@hull.ac.uk](mailto:d.c.gibbs@hull.ac.uk)

Professor Chris Cocklin, Professor & Director Monash Environment Institute,  
School of Geography & Environmental Science, Clayton Campus, University  
of Monash.  
Tel. +61 3 990 52926  
Email: [Chris.Cocklin@arts.monash.edu.au](mailto:Chris.Cocklin@arts.monash.edu.au)

## **6. RGRG Co-Sponsored Session with the Developing Areas Research Group**

### **Session Title: Young rural lives: Global perspectives on rural childhood and youth**

This session would support the collaborative writing of a book edited by the convenors (publisher currently being sought). The book 'Young Rural Lives' bridges traditional divides between research in Majority (third) and Minority (first) Worlds. It will collate thematically organised case studies and co-authored commentaries that integrate and advance current understandings and debates about rural childhood and youth. Paper presenters will be expected to have completed a draft chapter before the conference and to participate in a review of their paper/draft at the conference – co-authored thematic writing on the three themes will also be debated and planned in this session.

#### Session Aims:

- to compare and contrast the dynamics of life for rural young people in Majority and Minority worlds
- to explore generic theoretical questions of identity, agency and power that shape, and are shaped by, the everyday lives of these young people
- to document case studies of these themes and present collaborative critical conceptualisations of how further understandings can be achieved.

Abstracts are particularly welcomed that address the themes and negotiations that young people make in whatever rural setting they inhabit:

- identities and contexts
- agency and everyday actions
- negotiating power: material and discursive encounters

Please send offers of papers, including a title and an abstract of up to 150 words to the convenors:

Dr E. Robson, The School of Earth Sciences and Geography, Keele University, Keele, Staffordshire, ST5 5BG, United Kingdom  
Tel. 01782 584339  
E-mail: [e.robson@esci.keele.ac.uk](mailto:e.robson@esci.keele.ac.uk)

Dr Ruth Panelli, Department of Geography University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand.  
Tel. (+64) 3 479-8784  
E-mail: [rp@geography.otago.ac.nz](mailto:rp@geography.otago.ac.nz)

## **7. RURAL FUTURES UNIT**

Most readers will know of the decision by the University of Plymouth to cease teaching and research at its Seale-Hayne site. Given the eighty-plus years of continuous agricultural and rural education supplied by Seale-Hayne College,



and later the Seale-Hayne faculty of the University, it is perhaps not surprising that the move has been greeted with dismay in some quarters, and regarded by many as the end of the University's commitment to the rural agenda. However, the concentration of staff and students on the main city site has enabled the creation of new synergies between and within faculties.

This is particularly apparent in the School of Geography, where four members of the former Land Use and Rural Management Department – Martyn Warren, Paul Brassley, Ian Whitehead and Sanzidur Rahman – have joined Geography staff with specialisms in rural issues, including Richard Yarwood, Clive Charlton, and Stephen Essex. All are members of the Governance and Policy in Europe research group, chaired by Professor Geoff Wilson, a recent arrival from King's College, London, and himself a researcher in rural multifunctionality and agri-environmental policy. With the staff come a number of PhD students, and ongoing research projects

In a move to reap the benefits of interdisciplinarity offered by concentration on the one site, the Rural Futures Unit has been formed. Rural Futures is a 'community of practice' within the University of Plymouth, linking academics with each other and with practitioners, to the benefit of those living and working in rural areas. The network that results involves not just geographers, or even just social scientists, but includes academics from across the whole range of disciplines (including for instance, health and medicine, the arts, engineering, agricultural sciences, business, law, and sociology), with a special interest and expertise relating to rural areas and their populations.

The aim of Rural Futures is to act as a catalyst to using this expertise by:

- giving the University a single point of reference in the fields of rural economy, society and environment;
- helping to provide a credible and coherent external face for the University to rural communities, industries, agencies, government departments, etc; and
- encouraging effective development and coordination of undergraduate and postgraduate courses with a specific rural focus.

Activities of the Rural Futures Unit and Rural Future Network will include creating and managing a database of rural expertise; developing regional and international collaborations (including those with other universities in the region); designing and implementing relevant academic courses; organising public lectures and seminars; representing the university at conferences and other forums, and on various regional and national bodies; hosting visiting lecturers and researchers; and engaging actively in rural development activities.

In these activities, it will make full use of its close links with other units in the University such as the Regional Agrifood Centre (AFC), the Devon and Cornwall Rail Partnership, the Food and Human Nutrition Group, the Social Research and Regeneration Unit (SRRU), and the Enterprise Centre. Most importantly, it will be outward-facing as well as inward-facing, extending its network to rural development practitioners and stakeholders. This includes fellow academics in other institutions, and we would be very pleased to hear from anyone interested in collaboration, or just wanting to make contact. The Director of the Unit is Martyn Warren ([mwarren@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:mwarren@plymouth.ac.uk)), assisted by Susie Bissell ([Susie.bissell@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:Susie.bissell@plymouth.ac.uk) ; phone +44 (0)1752 238462). Web site: <http://www.geog.plym.ac.uk/ruralfutures>

## 8. NEW BOOKS

**Neil Chakraborti and Jon Garland (Eds.) (2004) Rural Racism, Willan Publishing, Cullompton. ISBN 1-84392-056-5 (hardback) £30.00**

This timely collection addresses the frequently overlooked issue of rural racism, providing a comprehensive overview of what is a multi-faceted and hitherto under-researched problem. Popular constructions of rurality have perpetuated imagery of idyllic, problem-free environments that have largely masked the process of 'othering' that works to marginalise particular groups from mainstream rural society. For minority ethnic communities, this 'othering process' can be tinged with racist harassment, hate and violence that can have serious implications for their sense of belonging in the rural.

This book aims to provide new insights on issues that are belatedly receiving recognition at a national and local level. It seeks to conceptualise rurality and the way in which the experiences of 'others' fit within the broader rural context, and examines the different forms that racism can take in the countryside. In addition to charting the particular dynamics of racism and rurality, the book highlights the importance of developing sustainable responses to the problem of rural racism and discusses ways in which prejudice can be challenged within environments typically unfamiliar with 'difference'.

The book will appeal to a wide audience of academics, students and practitioners with an interest in contemporary debates surrounding racism, rurality, identity and community.

The editors: Neil Chakraborti is a lecturer in Criminology at the Department of Criminology, University of Leicester; Jon Garland is Research Fellow in the same department. Over the past three years, they have conducted extensive research into issues of rural racism as well as issues of racism and anti-racism in football.

- this book addresses the frequently overlooked issue of rural racism, providing a timely overview of what is a multi-faceted problem
- first book to address problem of rural racism
- theorizes nature of rurality
- multi-disciplinary interest, especially criminologists, sociologists and geographers

### Contents

Foreword, by Ben Bowling

Introduction: Justifying the Study of Racism in the Rural, by Neil Chakraborti and Jon Garland (University of Leicester)

*Part 1: Contextualising Rural Racism*

1 Rurality and Racialised Others: Out of Place in the Countryside? by Paul Cloke (University of Bristol)

2 John O'Groats to Land's End: Racial Equality in Rural Britain? by Philomena J.F. de Lima (Inverness College)

*Part 2: Assessing the Problem*

3 Outsiders Within: The Reality of Rural Racism, by Dominic Malcolm (University of Leicester)

4 Unravelling a Stereotype: the Lived Experience of Black and Minority Ethnic People in Rural Wales, by Vaughan Robinson and Hannah Gardner (University of Wales, Swansea)

5 Cultures of Hate in the Urban and the Rural: Assessing the Impact of

Extremist Organisations, by Paul Iganski (University of Essex) and Jack Levin (Northeastern University in Boston)

6 Another Country? Community, Belonging and Exclusion in Rural England, by Jon Garland and Neil Chakraborti (University of Leicester)

*Part 3: Tackling the Problem*

7 Supporting Victims of Rural Racism: Learning Lessons from a Dedicated Racial Harassment Project, by Shammi Jalota (Suffolk County Council)

8 Challenging Rural Racism Through Education, by Kate Broadhurst (Perpetuity Research and Consultancy International) and Andi Wright (Youth Justice Board for England and Wales)

9 Responding to Rural Racism: Delivering Local Services, by Richard Pugh (Keele University)

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October 2004 224pp (234 x 156mm)

ISBN 1-84392-056-5 (hardback) £30.00 / US \$55.00

Willan Publishing, Culmcott House, Mill Street, Uffculme, Cullompton, Devon, EX15 3AT. (Tel: +44 (0) 1884 840337 or 849085; Fax: +44 (0) 1884 840251).

Further details of the book available on <http://www.willanpublishing.co.uk/rural.html>

## **9. ITEMS FOR SPRING 2005 NEWSLETTER**

Articles, letters and comments and other items for inclusion in the Spring Newsletter should be sent to: Stephen Essex, RGRG Newsletter Editor, School of Geography, University of Plymouth, Plymouth, PL4 8AA by 30 March 2005; Tel. +44 (0)1752 233080; Fax: +44 (0)1752 233054; e-mail: [s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk).

## **ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

The RGRG, like many other research groups, is making increasing use of electronic means of communication.

Update your email address!

Email is increasingly used to distribute the bi-annual Newsletter and urgent items of news throughout the year. Although email addresses are now available for about half of RGRG members, several appear to be out-of-date. If you have changed your email over the past few months or have recently gone 'on-line', please send your new address to Stephen Essex, School of Geography, University of Plymouth, Drake Circus, Plymouth, PL4 8AA. email: [sessex@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:sessex@plymouth.ac.uk)

The RGRG Web site (<http://www.geog.plym.ac.uk/ruralgeography/default.htm>) has been up and running for a few years. If you have any items that you wish to have posted on the RGRG web site, please contact Stephen Essex (University of Plymouth) preferably by email: [s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:s.essex@plymouth.ac.uk).