

Cultural Geography Study Group Report for 2007-2008

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Workshop initiative 2008

An initiative of the CGSG this year has been to organise a 1.5-day workshop involving a leading international figure in cultural geography. The study group was successful in obtaining funding of \$4991 from a new funding scheme of the IAG. The workshop will take the form of a 'master class', involving presentations, discussion and field activities. The title for the workshop is: 'GEOGRAPHIES LOST AND FOUND: LANDSCAPE, MOBILITY AND PRACTICE', and the international guest is Dr Hayden Lorimer (University of Glasgow).

Hayden is an outstanding geographer and a collegiate figure who is well respected both in the UK and internationally. As a passionate teacher and communicator, Hayden has been involved in a number of intensive research training programmes for graduate students in the UK. Hayden has been the recipient of number of competitive ESRC and AHRB research grants over the last few years. His research career has also been marked by a number of high-profile and creative collaborations, a further indication of his ability to involve and inspire others. His publishing record is similarly impressive and wide-ranging in terms of topic areas. Hayden is a section editor for Blackwell Publishing's flagship Geography e-journal *Geography Compass*.

Rationales for the workshop include:

- to have study group members schooled by a leading figure in the subdiscipline in key topics such as landscape, mobility, non-representational theory, embodiment, geographies of everyday life and new research methodologies;
- to stimulate intellectual engagement and debate amongst members with regard to some of the most current theory and practice the subdiscipline has to offer;
- to allow graduate students the opportunity to discuss their research and ideas with an eminent and enthusiastic figure;
- to practice, with Dr Lorimer's assistance, some of the new methodologies that will be under discussion during the workshop;
- to allow early career researchers and graduate students networking opportunities with an editor of *Geography Compass*;
- to continue to build and promote collegiality and the free exchange of ideas within what has been one of the IAG's most active study groups, in turn promoting and strengthening the IAG both within Australia and internationally.

The workshop has been designed as a critical consideration of intellectual advances and retreats in cultural geography. It takes landscape as a crucible and a workshop for contemporary concerns recognised across cultural, social, urban and historical geography, namely: practice, mobility, politics, place and ethics. The event will take place in Hobart (UTas Sandy Bay) on Saturday 28 and Sunday 29 June. The workshop will comprise of a number of component sessions, each allowing for general participation and discussion. For the majority of the workshop sessions, a short set reading and a presentation by Dr Lorimer will provide focus and stimulus for larger group discussions.

The response to the workshop has been excellent, with 28 confirmed participants, many of whom are students joining the IAG for the first time. The participating group is approximately half-half staff and students. As set out in the original application, the rationale for such an event is both intellectual and professional, with students especially being encouraged to speak individually with Hayden about their research and future directions.

The workshop initiative will also deliver a quality keynote paper to the IAG conference — 'Bio/Geo/Graphy: life in beauty's secrets and nature's surfaces' — to be held 9:30 AM Wednesday July 2. In this paper, Hayden will explore a range of intellectual endeavours encompassed in the term 'Bio-geographies'. This keynote is also an opportunity for IAG conference participants to be exposed to analyses afforded by new methodological and collaborative research practices in critical human geography and to hear some comments on the very different geographical context of Scotland. Hayden's general participation at the conference will facilitate wider engagement and networking opportunities between members of the IAG and Dr Lorimer (i.e. those who have not participated in the workshop).

The study group hopes that the new IAG funding will be offered again in 2009. Professor Catherine Nash (Queen Mary, University of London) has indicated she would be willing to be a guest of the study group in 2009.

Ongoing activities

In addition, since last July 2007 the CGSG and its members have set about organising a series of sessions for the upcoming 2008 IAG conference. The Group has 7 sponsored or co-sponsored sessions that have been well subscribed with papers. The sessions will make a significant contribution to the Hobart conference. These are:

1. Performative Geographies
2. Scales and spaces of sexuality and gender
3. Rethinking resources: alternative perspectives on resource studies
4. Memory and materiality
5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration (Panel Session)
6. Geographies of racialisation
7. Urban natures

As part of the website updating being undertaken by the IAG, the study group aims to enhance its web profile and update and promote its CGSG 'Directory of Expertise'. Standardising and expanding the entries, and additional links to individual home pages would significantly enhance this resource and potentially allow for broader community recognition and interaction.

It is likely that the remainder of 2008 and early 2009 will be spent calling for, promoting and organising the group's sessions for IAG 2009, and organising a 2009 study group event, depending on the success of the 2008 workshop and the wishes of members. The latter will be canvassed at the CGSG Business Meeting, 8:30AM on Wednesday July 2.

Rachel Hughes