

**CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY SPECIALTY GROUP  
OF THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS**

**2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT**

**I. Mission Statement:**

The Cultural Geography Specialty Group (CGSG) seeks to promote and encourage scholarly research and superior teaching in the field of Cultural Geography through the exchange of current thoughts, trends and information focusing on all areas of the field. The CGSG shall encourage, facilitate and sponsor the organization of paper sessions and discussion panels at national and regional meetings of the Association of American Geographers (AAG) as well as other seminars, symposiums, and conferences at which themes relating to cultural geography are discussed. The CGSG will also reward junior scholars by hosting paper competitions and awarding research grants. The CGSG will stimulate dialog about and among the discipline and represent the members in all matters related to membership in the national association (AAG).

**II. 2010 Dues:**

Regular Members: \$5.00; Students: \$2.00

**III. Board of Directors:**

**Chair**

Incoming: Weronika Kusek (Northern Michigan University), term 2015—2017 [wkusek@nmu.edu](mailto:wkusek@nmu.edu) (elected)

Outgoing: Chris Post (Kent State University at Stark), term 2013---2015  
[cpost2@kent.edu](mailto:cpost2@kent.edu)

**Treasurer/Secretary**

Ola Johansson (University of Pittsburgh---Johnstown), term 2014---2016  
[johans@pitt.edu](mailto:johans@pitt.edu)

**Program Director:**

Nicholas Jon Crane (Ohio State University), term 2014---2016  
[crane.61@osu.edu](mailto:crane.61@osu.edu)

**Awards Director:**

Outgoing: Ang Subulwa (University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh), term 2013---2015  
[subulwaa@uwosh.edu](mailto:subulwaa@uwosh.edu)

Incoming: Joni Palmer (Univeristy of Colorado), term 2015-2017 [joni.palmer@Colorado.EDU](mailto:joni.palmer@Colorado.EDU) (elected)

**Nominations Director:**

Emily Fekete (University of Kansas), term 2014---2016  
[emilyfekete@gmail.com](mailto:emilyfekete@gmail.com)

**Graduate Student Representatives (2):**

Outgoing: Don Colley (San Diego State University), term  
2013---2015 [dcolley@rohan.sdsu.edu](mailto:dcolley@rohan.sdsu.edu)

Incoming: Laura Johnson (Michigan State University), term 2015-2017 [john3418@msu.edu](mailto:john3418@msu.edu)  
(elected)

Matthew Cook (University of Tennessee), term 2014---2016  
[mcook6@utk.edu](mailto:mcook6@utk.edu)

**IV. Accomplishments, Activities Scheduled, Future Plans and Directions****Business Meeting**

The CGSG Business Meeting was held in Chicago, Thursday, April 23 11:50am in conjunction with the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting. There were approximately 20 people in attendance. This participation is similar to 2014 and up from previous years, which I believe can be attributed to the noon time slot and competing with other business meetings.

The agenda for the meeting included:

- a report from the Chair (details below);
- the announcement of elected officers (see above) and graduate student representative;
- a report from each of the officers (Program Director, Awards Director, and Secretary/Treasurer), and a report from the graduate student representative on this year's "Landscape Photography Exhibit" and Graduate Student breakfast (details below);
- discussion of adding a Poster Award (for graduate students), an ad hoc Exploratory grant (also for grads), and stabilizing the hosting of our website;
- a brainstorm of next year's (2016) CGSG Marquee speaker.

With exception to Don Colley (Grad Student rep) all other current and elected officers were present at the meeting.

Chair Post reported on updating and streamlining the CGSG Bylaws and adding a bullet---point history of officers, marquee speakers, and graduate student award winners to the group's website.

The following individuals were elected to available positions on the CGSG Board:

- Weronika Kusek (Chair, Northern Michigan University), term 2015---2017 [wkusek@nmu.edu](mailto:wkusek@nmu.edu)
- Joni Palmer (Awards Director, Univeristy of Colorado), term 2015-2017

[joni.palmer@Colorado.EDU](mailto:joni.palmer@Colorado.EDU)

- Laura Johnson (Grad Rep, Michigan State University), term 2015-2017 [john3418@msu.edu](mailto:john3418@msu.edu)

### **Newsletter**

The CGSG Newsletter, which was published previously twice a year in hardcopy form, has been transformed to an annual online publication (distributed directly before the AAG meeting) that was sent to each specialty group member via email and was placed on the new CGSG web page <http://cultural.aag.org> The reduction in number was necessary because the newsletter has been reformatted to provide more substantive content rather than simply announcements.

The 2015 newsletter (<https://du1ux2871uqv.cloudfront.net/sites/default/files/file/CGSG%20Newsletter%202015.pdf>), edited by Chris Post and Ola Johansson, contained the following items: comments/notes from the chair, officer reports, a listing by day and time of all of the CGSG sponsored paper sessions, advertisements for annual Marquee Speaker session and Graduate Student Coffee, and an essay by Steven Ericson titled “The Cultural Landscapes of Chicago’s Baseball Stadiums”.

### **2015 CGSG Student paper and Research Grant Awards:**

We received 27 submissions for our awards this year, up from 10 last year. We received 22 submissions for grants, and five for paper awards. There were no submissions for our masters-level paper award. This year, our winners were honored at the CGSG Marquee speaker session in Chicago. Ang Subulwa announced the award winners and presented the certificates and checks at the at the Marquee Address. Only Willie Wright, winner of a Denis E. Cosgrove award, was not able to attend and received his certificate and award at the Business Meeting.

#### Denis E. Cosgrove PhD Research Grants

Willie Wright, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill

“Free the Land!: A Geography of the Republic of New Afrika, 1968 – Present”

Sara Hughes, UCLA

“Locating ‘Place’ in Settler Consciousness: Identity Construction in Two West Bank Settlement Blocs”

#### Masters Level Research

Grant Madeleine Hamlin, Syracuse University

“Chicago's Carceral Geographies: Public Housing and Prisoner Re-entry in the City”

#### Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov PhD Paper Award

Billy Hall, Florida International University

“Before food deserts: Reconstructing Overtown's neighborhood food environment from Jim Crow to Urban Renewal, Miami, FL”

### **2015 Annual Meeting**

The 2015 CGSG Marquee Speaker was David Wilson of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Wilson is an expert on urban-economic globalization and its impact on ostracized communities. For his talk, Dr. Wilson applied his theories specifically to Chicago’s globalization

rhetoric and its impact on city's predominantly black South Side. His address will be published in the *Journal of Cultural Geography*, October 2015 (title TBA). We are pleased to report that Dr. Wilson spoke to a packed house of approximately 50 attendees.

In the 2013 CGSG Report, there was a noted desire to reach out and collaborate more with geography journals such as *Journal of Cultural Geography* (already established) or *Material Culture*. To this, we initiated a new partnership with the American Geographical Society (AGS) and their journal, *FOCUS on Geography*. The Landscape Photography Exhibit, organized by Graduate Student Representative Matt Cook received 16 submissions. This was up from last year (12) but down from 33 in 2012, 19 in 2011, and 15 in 2010. The AAG continued its support of this event with boards and space in the Exhibit Hall for presentation. *FOCUS* will publish 3 photos and accompanying essays explaining them, from the exhibit. This part of the event was judged by the *FOCUS* Editorial Board members.

In 2015, the CGSG sponsored (or co---sponsored) 121(!) sessions—double what we sponsored last year. In addition to the CGSG Marquee speaker, we provided \$150 of financial support for one session: the Indigenous Peoples SG hosting of Dr. Warrior from the University of Illinois and his plenary talk to their group. For the record, this was requested by the IPSG rather last---minute (and they recognized as such), but we were willing and happy to help. We also co-sponsored the Historical Geography SGs Plenary talk and hope more of a relationship can be forged between the CGSG and HGSG.

The graduate student representatives of the CGSG organized a morning social event/breakfast at Wildberry in Chicago. The event attracted approximately 12 CGSG members, down from last year but maintaining momentum. They plan to continue this tradition at next year's annual meeting.

#### **Changes and Future Directions:**

The CGSG made several changes over the past year and looks to further expand its outreach in the coming months.

- The group established a social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram and is using Dropbox for file sharing. Administrative access to all of these accounts is given to all board members, however most responsibility for sharing information across these platforms rests in the hands of the first year graduate representative.
- The group also better defined the roles of its grad reps. While the rep in their first year will promote the group via social media, the second year grad rep will focus on organizing the group's AAG activities, especially the Graduate Student Breakfast and Landscape Photography Exhibit.
- Upon request of Craig Colten, the CGSG donated \$150 to the principal of the J.B. Jackson award given by the AAG to the best book in geography that appeals to a wider audience beyond the academy.

- The group decided to maintain a more enhanced website presence in connection with Kent State University at Stark, home institution of now-Past Chair Chris Post. This Kent State-housed site will connect to <http://cultural.aag.org> and this will be the group's known URL for the years to come while Kent State (or any other institution) actually hosts the site.
- The group approved updated by-laws (available on the group's Knowledge Communities site and webpage).
- With the AAG's establishment of more broadly defined Cultural/Human and Physical Geography Poster Sessions at this year's meeting in Chicago, and in addition to the dwindling number of applications for the group's annual Paper Awards (including the Jordan-Bychkov award) the CGSG is strongly considering establishing a Poster Award of similar prize value in addition to or instead of the paper award(s). This decision will be made the current board. The current board is also considering the implementation of an ad hoc Exploratory Research Grant named after Alexander von Humboldt. The Humboldt Award was previously given approximately 7 years ago when the CGSG budget was in excellent shape. We are there again and this ad-hoc award is being reconsidered.

## V. Membership and Participation

According to the AAG Knowledge Communities, there are 936 paid members of the Cultural Geography Specialty Group (up from 622 last year). Besides the AAG membership list, a listserv for the CGSG is maintained at Oklahoma State University and it currently has 555 registered members (up from 528 last year).

## Financial Report

The CGSG bank account is kept with funds in the AAG Central Office. The current account statement can be obtained from Teri Martin or Michelle Ledoux in the main AAG office. (A recent statement appears on the next page of this report). After 3,870.30 as of 12/31/2014, the CGSG spent \$1,500 on the Grad Student Awards, \$150 on judge honorarium for our paper awards, \$150 to IPSG and the JB Jackson award, ~\$250 for the Graduate Student Breakfast at Wildberry, and \$1,095 on Marquee Speaker Wilson. January through March dues withstanding, this leaves the CGSG with approximately \$725.30 in addition to any membership dues collected since January 1, 2015.

Date	Description	Receipts	Disbursements	Balance
1/31/14	Dues collected Jan 2014	185.00		3785.30
2/28/14	Dues collected Feb 2014	142.00		3927.30
3/12/14	T&F sponsorship of Marquee Speaker	380.00		4307.30
3/24/14	Scarpaci—speaker reimbursement	1095.00		3212.30
3/31/14	Dues collected March 2014	122.00		3334.30
4/2/14	Transfer to IPSG for Plenary Speak-er	100.00		3234.30

4/10/14	Keough— reimbursement for AM14	142.75	3091.55
4/3/14	Sando—Cosgrove Research Grant	500.00	2591.55
4/3/14	Galeucia—Cosgrove Research Grant	500.00	2091.55
4/3/14	Awards judges honorarium	150.00	1941.55
4/30/14	Dues collected April 2014	105.00	2046.55
5/31/14	Dues collected May 2014	136.00	2182.55
6/30/14	Dues collected June 2014	89.00	2271.55
7/31/14	Dues collected July 2014	43.00	2314.55
8/18/14	Void check dated 4/8/13 for L. Kong	1595.00	3909.55
8/31/14	Dues collected August 2014	93.00	4002.55
9/9/14	Check reissue Kong speaker reimb.	1595.00	2407.55
9/30/14	Dues collected Sept 2014	168.00	2575.55
10/31/14	Dues collected Oct 2014	586.00	3161.55
11/30/14	Dues collected Nov 2014	592.00	3753.55
12/31/14	Dues collected Dec 2014	117.00	3870.55
<b>12/31/14</b>	<b>Year End Balance</b>		<b>3870.55</b>

#### **VI. Special Requests or Questions for Council**

The CGSG voiced two concerns in last year's report: timing of the business meeting and Wi-Fi at the annual meeting. Both were met this year with no continuing concerns. I personally (Chris Post) thank the AAG for the meeting time (and length of meeting time) and the great Wi-Fi access.

Respectfully submitted by:



Chris W. Post, Chair (2013---2015)  
[cpost2@kent.edu](mailto:cpost2@kent.edu)