

**CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY SPECIALTY GROUP OF THE ASSOCIATION OF
AMERICAN GEOGRAPHERS
2015-2016 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. 2016 Dues:

Regular Members: \$5.00
Students: \$2.00

III. Board of Directors:

Weronika Kusek
Chair | 2015-2017
Northern Michigan University
wkusek@nmu.edu

Ola Johansson
Secretary-Treasurer | 2016-2018
University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown
johans@pitt.edu

Nicholas Jon Crane
Program Director | 2016-2018
University of Wyoming
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Joni M Palmer
Awards Director | 2016-2018
University of Colorado
joni.palmer@colorado.edu

Matt Cook
Nominations Director | 2016-2018
Eastern Michigan University
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Hannah Gunderman
Grad Student Rep | 2016-2018
University of Tennessee
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Jordan Brasher
Grad Student Rep | 2016-2018
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IV. Updates and Future Plans

Business Meeting: The CGSG Business Meeting was held in San Francisco on March 31, 2016. Meeting was declared opened by Nicholas Crane on behalf of Chair Weronika Kusek.

Chair Weronika Kusek could not attend the AAG meeting, Ola Johansson attended the meeting of Specialty Group Chairs.

The Nominations Director's report (by Emily Fekete): CGSG proceeded with online elections in 2016. We used a free software to do this and overall 91 people voted. This year, all elections were non-contested, except for the student representative positions. There we had four people who ran for two positions.

The Program Director's report (by Nicholas Jon Crane): CGSG sponsored 136 sessions in San Francisco.

This year's CGSG sponsored breakfast was attended by 14 people.

The Awards Director's report (Nicholas Crane, on behalf of Joni Palmer): Keynote speaker Wolsh donated her fee to CGSG student awards. CGSG sponsored awards were given to the best PhD-level paper (but none on the Master's level) and to PhD and Master's level research grants. We had many PhD-level grant proposals but only two on the Master's level. We discussed potential travel grants for students and low income faculty. The cost of AAG is a concern beyond CGSG. In fact, a petition was circulated at the San Francisco meeting to locate future AAG meetings at less expensive conference destination.

The Secretary-Treasurer's report (by Ola Johansson): The CGSG budget is weaker this year than it has been during recent years. The number of CGSG members hold steady but there has been a shift towards more student members (who pay a lower fee).

Grad Student Rep report (by Matthew Cook): The photo exhibit had 13 participants this year. This represents a modest decline from previous years. Unfortunately, our collaboration with the journal *Focus* has ended. Photo winners in the past have been encouraged to submit photos and a brief essay to *Focus*; however, the publisher of the journal (AGS) has discontinued *Focus*..

Newsletter: The CGSG Newsletter was an online publication distributed directly before the AAG meeting. The newsletter was sent to each specialty group member via email and was placed on the CGSG web page www.stark.kent.edu/CGSG. The newsletter was updated and edited by Weronika Kusek.

2016 CGSG Student paper and Research Grant Awards:

Denis E. Cosgrove Research Grant

Dylan Harris, Ph.D., Clark University, Geography

Title of Proposal: *Re-imagining Global Climate Change: Stories from High-Mountain Communities in Nepal and Bolivia*

Master's Level Research Grant

Michael Hawkins, Masters, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, Geography

Title of Proposal: *Militarized Intimacies and Nostalgias: American Military Retirees in Olongapo City, the Philippines*

Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov Student/Ph.D. Paper Award

Sara Hughes, Ph.D., UCLA, Geography

Title of Paper: *Suburban occupation: constructing "home" in West Bank settlements*

Plans for AAG in Boston:

Breakfast activity, Marquee Speaker, Photo Exhibit are being organized for the AAG meeting in Boston.

The goal for this year is to increase communication with our members. We will use emails a regular basis which will include relevant job ads, relevant publications, etc.

V. Membership and Participation

According to the AAG Knowledge Communities, there are 1009 paid members of the Cultural Geography Specialty Group. The CGSG uses Knowledge Communities platform to contact its members. Facebook account as well as Twitter are other means to communicate with the members. Kent State at Stark maintains the CGSG website that we regularly use.

VI. Financial Report

The CGSG bank account is kept with funds in the AAG Central Office. The current account statement can be obtained from Michelle Ledoux in the main AAG office. The most recent account statement that we have (see below) indicates that we had approximately \$2170 in our account as of July 31, 2016. That is roughly \$500 more than we had one year earlier. In 2015 our account dipped somewhat due to a decline in incomes (most likely a result of more non-paying student members but fewer fee paying faculty). At the 2016 San Francisco meeting, the Marquee Speaker Jennifer Wolch from Cal-Berkeley donated her speaker stipend to pay for student awards, which means that our financial status improved again. We spent \$1500 on student awards this year, as well as a \$50 honorarium to a paper judge and approximately \$213 on a graduate student breakfast in San Francisco. The financial situation of the CGSG is stable.

319	7/31/15	Dues Collected for July 2015	96.00		1,625.55
320	8/31/15	Dues Collected for Aug 2015	92.00		1,717.55
321					
322	8/31/15	Balance			1,717.55
323					
324	<i>8/31/14</i>	<i>Balance forward</i>			<i>\$ 1,717.55</i>
325	9/30/15	Dues Collected for Sept 2015	196.00		1,913.55
326	10/31/15	Dues Collected for Oct 2015	808.00		2,721.55
327	11/30/15	Dues collected for Nov. 2015	127.00		2,848.55
328	12/31/15	Dues collected for Dec. 2015	190.00		3,038.55
329	1/31/16	Dues collected for Jan. 2016	229.00		3,267.55
330	2/29/16	Dues collected for Feb. 2016	211.00		3,478.55
331	3/31/16	Johansson - reimbursement for AM2016 F&B		(213.24)	3,265.31
332	3/23/16	Hughes - Terry G. Jordan Bychkov PhD Paper Award		(250.00)	3,015.31
333	3/23/16	Harris - Denis E. Cosgrove Research Grant Award		(500.00)	2,515.31
334	3/23/16	Hawkins - MA Research Grant Award		(250.00)	2,265.31
335	3/31/16	Dues collected for March	132.00		2,397.31
336	4/26/16	Harris - Denis E. Cosgrove Research Grant Award (2nd payment)		(500.00)	1,897.31
337	4/26/16	Wise - Paper Comp. Judging		(50.00)	1,847.31
338	4/30/16	Dues collected for April	93.00		1,940.31
339	5/31/16	Dues collected for May	78.00		2,018.31
340	6/30/16	Dues collected for June	66.00		2,084.31
341	7/31/16	Dues collected for July	86.00		2,170.31
342					
343	7/31/16	Balance			2,170.31
344					

VII. Special Requests or Questions for Council

It has been brought to the board's attention that students lack funds to attend the annual AAG meeting.

Additionally, many junior faculty have reported that due to financial issues at their institutions they do not have enough funds to cover the AAG membership, conference fee, accommodation, transportation, etc. Due to these issues many will be unable to attend the annual meeting; others try to attend every other year.

Respectfully submitted by:

Weronika A. Kusek

Chair 2015-2017