

AAG Urban Geography Specialty Group

NEWSLETTER

Vol. 10, No. 3
October/November 1989

Letter from the Chair

Many UGSG members have been involved in planning sessions for the Toronto meetings. The AAG Program Committee set a new challenge for the specialty groups this year by requesting sessions that explicitly reflect the two themes that have been identified for the Toronto meetings: Sharing the North American Continent and Sharing the Global Village. In an effort to provide focus for our annual meeting, each of these will provide the theme for a morning plenary session, to be followed by specialty group sessions related to the day's theme. David Ley and Neil Smith have been heading up the UGSG program planning and, as is evident from their report in this newsletter, have succeeded quite nicely in meeting the AAG's challenge. A full listing of sessions will appear in the February newsletter.

Please let me know of any specialty group issues or concerns you would like me to raise at the Specialty Group Chairs' meeting in Toronto; typically a number of good ideas come out of that meeting for consideration by AAG Council. For example, the notion of a Specialty Group newsletter exchange (described below) had its origin at a Specialty Group Chairs' meeting.

Finally, remember that the next issue of this newsletter is scheduled to go to press mid-February: get those hot news items to Paul Knox so that the next issue can be as lively and informative as this one.

Susan Hanson

Urban Geography Dissertation Award

The Urban Geography Specialty Group of the Association of American Geographers announces its Eighth Annual Dissertation Competition for recent doctoral dissertations in urban geography. Dissertations addressing any aspect of urban geography and submitted for a degree awarded during the 1989 calendar year are eligible. Previous winning dissertations have examined such topics as service-manufacturing linkages and innovations in urban firms; private planning for economic development; the

spatial structure of local labor markets; the casual poor in Third World Cities; and family and class in a new industrial city.

It is anticipated that individuals submitting dissertations will be presenting a paper at the Annual Meeting of the AAG. The winner will be announced at the AAG meeting in Toronto, where she/he will receive a selection of books courtesy of John Wiley & Sons. The dissertation review committee is composed of John Mercer (University of Victoria) chair; Susan Christopherson (Cornell); Meric Gertler (University of

Toronto); Sallie Marston (University of Arizona).

To enter the competition please send one copy of your dissertation and a dissertation abstract to: Professor John Mercer, Department of Geography, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2, Canada.

Entries must be received by December 15, 1989.

1988 award-winning dissertations:

Private Planning for Economic Development: Local Business Coalitions in Columbus, Ohio: 1858-1986, by Andrew Mair, The Ohio State University, 1988. Professor Kevin R. Cox, Advisor

The object of this dissertation is to explain the processes involved in the formation of local capitalist classes. Research on 'community power structures' has revealed the existence of powerful local business elites, but explanation in terms of local economic interests has been insufficiently developed. Institutionalized local business coalitions, such as chambers of commerce, are an important medium of local capitalist class formation. When the external linkages of a business firm are constrained to a certain locality and the firm is relatively immobile, the firm is *locally dependent*, and is reliant upon the growth and stability of a local economy. This is a problem, since the wider political economy is unstable. One strategy for coping with local dependence is to participate in a local business coalition.

Case studies of the formation process of three local business coalitions in Columbus, Ohio, since 1858 reveal the role of the local dependence of participant firms and their concern with local economic growth. These coalitions were active in attracting new business to Columbus and in expanding local infrastructure provision.

Two conflicts within local business coalitions reveal how contradictory interests can thwart local capitalist class formation. A short struggle over financ-

ing a dam involved the question of local control over the Columbus economy. A sixty year struggle over an industrial expansion strategy pitted smaller firms that supported the policy against large firms that resisted industrial branch plants.

Four collective business projects to redevelop the central business district reveal various coalition formation processes, as well as all manner of conflicts among firms. Headquarters firms dominated local capitalist class formation around redevelopment strategies. A micro-geographic politics prevented collective action on a number of occasions. Planning the development of the whole central business district is even more difficult than undertaking large construction projects.

The local dependence of firms explains their interest in local economic development. However, local capitalist class formation in pursuit of development is contingent upon organizational relationships among firms, actions of other local actors, and instabilities in the wider political economy. Further work is needed on how these contingencies are structured and interact with local dependence to produce specific forms of local capitalist class formation.

Service to Manufacturing Linkage and Innovation Among Small to Medium Sized Firms: Empirical Evidence from Metropolitan Toronto by Alan MacPherson, University of Toronto, 1988. Professor John Britton, Advisor

This dissertation examines the technological and growth-generating effects of service-to-manufacturing linkages in Metropolitan Toronto. Particular attention is given to the technical complementarities which exist between small industrial firms and specialist units in the service sector. It is argued that knowledge-intensive inputs from the producer services play a fundamental role in local industrial innovation. Empirical evidence from a sample of small manufacturers is used to illustrate the scale, nature and effects of current linkage arrangements. Data from the sample indicate that manufacturing firms with

less than 200 employees deliver regular streams of income to local service establishments.

The dissertation begins with an assessment of the job-generating potential of small manufacturing firms in Canada. Industrial innovation is identified as an urgent priority for these firms, especially in light of current trade imbalances in manufactured products. An explanation of the role of high-order services in economic development and technological change precedes the detailed empirical investigations of local linkage networks. A sampling procedure for analyzing the organizational and performance characteristics of Toronto's small manufacturing firms is described. Five goods-producing industries are singled out for detailed examination, representing a broad technological gradient based on occupational criteria. Questionnaire responses from a stratified sample of over 100 small firms are analyzed and discussed. Evidence from the survey indicates that producer service linkages are positively associated with small firm innovation and export-involvement. Progressive firms with foreign customers exhibit strong backward links to consultants in the service sector. An especially important finding is that frequency and new product development is directly associated with service linkages for both exporting and non-exporting firms.

Empirical material from a series of firm-specific case-examples is then synthesized with some of the recent theoretical perspectives on industrial organization and change. Specialized service subcontracting is described in terms of selective vertical disintegration within manufacturing. Here, it is suggested that external consultants supply key technical inputs more efficiently than individual small enterprises that have undergone divisions of labour. The dissertation concludes by outlining some of the main organizational features of the new urban economy. These most notably include the rise of the small business sector, the growth of specialist units in the producer services and the increased centrality of technical knowledge in urban and regional development.

Review

James W. Fonseca, *Urban Rank-Size Hierarchy: A Mathematical Interpretation*, Monograph No. 8, Institute of Mathematical Geography, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1989, 86pp.

For many years now urban geographers have been fascinated by the nature of city size distributions. Indeed, the plotting of such distributions has been seen as a necessary preliminary to the detailed description of urban systems. More often than not, however, this kind of research has degenerated into a rather sterile empirical exercise, involving goodness-of-fit tests and estimating the exponent in the ubiquitous rank-size distribution.

Within this context, Fonseca's monograph is a pleasant surprise, as it outlines a novel approach to the characterization of city size distributions. In particular, the author contends that data which approximate a rank-size distribution can also be described by the curve of an equiangular spiral. This contention is first demonstrated empirically, using urbanized area data for the United States, and then some of the mathematical implications are explored. The notion of Fibonacci numbers is central to the argument, as an equiangular spiral represents the mathematical plot of a particular Fibonacci sequence. In addition, the author offers the physical analogy of a conical shell to suggest how a continuous distribution, such as that exhibited by a rank-size relationship, can simultaneously be considered a hierarchical distribution, as generated by settlements in a central place system. Throughout the discussion individual ideas are subjected to rigorous empirical analysis, and the author concludes by suggesting a number of directions for future research.

In sum, this monograph provides a thorough overview of our current knowledge concerning city size distributions, and presents an alternative mathematical interpretation of those distributions. My

major reservation with respect to this genre of research is that the mathematical and statistical exploration of city size distributions appears to have contributed remarkably little to our understanding of the underlying processes responsible for urban growth, decline, and overall system evolution.

Martin Cadwallader
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Call for Papers

The seventh International Making Cities Livable Conference will take place in Carmel, CA, March 13-17, 1990. 100-word abstracts should be sent *as soon as possible* to Suzanne H. Crowhurst Lennard, IMCL Conference, P.O. Box 7586, Carmel, California 93921.

Urbanization of the Suburbs

Volume 10 Number 4 of *Urban Geography* is a special issue on the urbanization of the suburbs, edited by Patricia Gober.

AAG Specialty Groups

At its August meeting the AAG Council considered a request, brought forward by the specialty group chairs, that AAG members be allowed to belong to more than three specialty groups. After considerable debate, Council decided against the proposal, but suggested that one way of enabling members to keep current with the activities of more than three specialty groups would be to set up a formal newsletter exchange at the annual meetings. There will be, therefore, in Toronto a place in the exhibit hall for specialty groups to make their newsletters available to anyone who wants to purchase them for a small fee.

IGC 1992

UGSG members are encouraged to submit papers for the special IGC publication *Geographical Snapshots of North*

America. Details of the publication are given in the October 1989 issue of the *AAG Newsletter*. Further details can be obtained from Donald G. Janelle, Department of Geography, University of Western Ontario, Social Science Centre, London, Canada N6A 5C2. The closing date for submissions is March 31, 1991.

Urban Affairs Association Meetings

UGSG members unable to get to Toronto may be interested to know that the Urban Affairs Association's annual meeting will be held in Charlotte, North Carolina, April 18-21, 1990. The theme of the conference will be "Urban America—the decade ahead". Details of the conference can be obtained from Raymond Burby, Center for Urban and Regional Studies (CB3410), University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-3410. (919) 962-3074.

ANU Urban Research Unit Publications

The Urban research Unit of the Australian National University has a series of Working Papers and a regular newsletter. Details from Shelley Schreiner, Urban Research Unit, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, GPO Box 4, Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia.

Reminder

Copy deadlines for the newsletter are:

Vol 11, No.1:	February 15 1990
Vol 11, No.2:	June 15 1990
Vol 11, No.3:	October 15 1990
Vol 12, No.1:	February 15 1990

You can reach me through BITNET at KNOX@VTVM2 or by writing to me: Urban Affairs & Planning, VPI&SU, Blacksburg, VA 24061-0113.

Paul Knox

Toronto Annual Meeting April 19-22 1989

For the Toronto meetings, the UGSG has organized and sponsored a slate of sessions:

1. Value and Change in the Built Environment
Organizer & Chair: Robert A. Beauregard
Paper Presenters:
Helga Leitner
Robert A. Beauregard
Anna Haila
Discussant: Neil Smith
2. Southern California: Urban and Regional Development Processes
Organizer: Allen J. Scott
Paper Presenters:
D. Hess
J. M. De Vet
B. Pitman
R. Law and J. Wolch
R. Keil
3. The Urban 'Underclass': Statistical Approaches
Organizer: Eric Sheppard
Paper Presenters:
Richard Greene
Steven Holloway
Thomas Cooke
John Fieser
4. The Urban 'Underclass': Forum (Co-sponsored with Socialist Specialty Group)
Panel Organizers:
Eric Sheppard
John Mercer
5. Housing, Class, Gender (Co-sponsored with Geographical Perspectives on Women)
Organizer: Neil Smith
Chair and Discussant: Joanna Regulska
Paper Presenters:
Laura Smethurst
Myrna Breitbart
Lawrence Knopp
6. Urban Geography: North American Themes
Chair: Briavel Holcomb
Paper Presenters:
Michael Romanos
Paul Caris
Evelyne Peters
7. Cleveland's Civic Vision 2000 Plan: Planning for the Future
Organizer: Harry Margulis
Paper Presenters:
Hunter Morrison
Robert N. Brown
Linda S. Henrichsen
Frank Pietravoia
Joseph D. Roman
8. Author Meets Critics: Ed Soja's 'Postmodern Geographies' (Co-sponsored by Socialist Specialty Group)
Organizer and Chair: Neil Smith
Paper Presenters:
Derek Gregory
Andrew Kirby
Liz Bondi
Michael Watts
Ed Soja
9. Docklands and Notting Hill: Two Londons
Chair: Liz Bondi

Paper Presenters:
Adrian Smith
Darrel Crilley
John Western

10. Special Plenary Session:

Organizer and Chair: Neil Smith

Rosalyn Deutsche. "Our Differences: A Postmodern Response to Harvey and Soja."

(Co-sponsored by Socialist and Political Specialty Groups, and Geographical Perspectives on Women).

Rosalyn Deutsche is an art historian and critic who teaches at the Cooper Union in New York City. She has written extensively about art and urban issues and is on the editorial board of the journal *October*.

11. Urban Canada: Recent Trends and Policy Issues

Organizers: David Ley and Larry Bourne

Chair: David Ley

Participants: Deryck Holdsworth

Danavis Rose and Paul Villeneuve

Michael Broadway

John Miron

Nominations for the UGSG Board—REVISED

The final slate is as follows (ballot in February newsletter):

<i>Chair</i>	Neil Smith (Rutgers)
<i>Vice-Chair</i>	John Paul Jones III (University of Kentucky) Eric Sheppard (University of Minnesota)
<i>Secretary/Treasurer</i>	Briavel Holcomb (Rutgers) Harry L. Margulis (Cleveland State University)
<i>Student Board Members</i>	Kris Monzel (Syracuse University) Melissa Gilbert (Clark University)
<i>Board Members</i>	Nancy Ettlinger (Ohio State University) Diane Whalley (North Texas State University) Tom Kontuly (University of Utah) Kim England (Miami University of Ohio) Kavita Pandit (University of Georgia) Kevin McHugh (Arizona State University)

Recent books on urban geography (compiled by Peter Muller)

African Cities in Crisis: Managing Rapid Urban Growth. Richard E. Stren and Rodney R. White, Editors. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1989.

America Becomes Urban: The Development of U.S. Cities and Towns, 1780-1980. Eric H. Monkkenen. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.

America's New Market Geography: Nation, Region and Metropolis. George Sternlieb and James W. Hughes, Editors. NB: Rutgers University, Center for Urban Policy Research, 1988.

Borderland: Origins of the American Suburb, 1920-1939. John R. Stilgoe. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988.

Building Chicago: Suburban Developers and the Creation of a Divided Metropolis. Ann Durkin Keating. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1988.

The Clustering of America: A Vivid Portrait of the Nation's 40 Neighborhood Types--From Urban Gold Coast to Hard Scrabble. Michael J. Weiss. New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

Economic Restructuring and Political Response. Robert A. Beauregard, Editor. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, urban Affairs Annual Review No. 34, 1989.

Federal Commission Reports Pertaining to National Goals, Resources and Environment, Population, Settlement and Residential Issues: A Bibliography 1950-1987, Public Administration Series, P2522, Monticello, IL: Vance Bibliographies.

- From Many Strands: Ethnic and Racial Groups in Contemporary America.* Stanley Lieberson and Mary C. Waters. New York: Russell Sage Editor, 1988.
- Gentrification and Distressed Cities: An Assessment of Trends in Intrametropolitan Migration.* Kathryn P. Nelson. Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.
- Growing the Next Silicon Valley: A Guide for Successful Regional Planning.* Roger Miller and Marcel Cote. Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1987.
- Hispanic Lands and Peoples: Selected Writings of James J. Parsons.* William M. Denevan, ed. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, Dellplain Latin American Studies, No. 23, 1989.
- Human Territorial Functioning: An Empirical, Evolutionary Perspective on Individual and Small Group Territorial Cognitions, Behaviors, and Consequences.* Ralph B. Taylor. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- La Capital: The Biography of Mexico City.* Jonathan Kandell. New York: Random House, 1988.
- Land: The Central Human Settlement Issue.* H. Peter Oberlander. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988.
- Land Use Planning and the Mediation of Urban Change: The British Planning System in Practice.* Patsy Healey et al. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Location Strategies for Retail and Service Firms.* Avijit Ghosh and Sara L. McLafferty. Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath, 1987.
- Metropolis: From the Division of Labor to Urban Form.* Allen J. Scott. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
- Migration and Residential Mobility in the United States.* Larry Long. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1988.
- The Mobility of Labor and Capital: A Study in International Investment and Labor Flow.* Saskia Sassen. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Nation Into State: The Shifting Symbolic Foundations of American Nationalism.* Wilbur Zelinsky. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Planning Local Economic Development: Theory and Practice.* Edward J. Blakely. Newbury Park, California: Sage Publications, Sage Library of Social Research, No. 168, 1989.
- Policies and Plans for Rural People: An International Perspective.* Paul J. Cole, ed. Winchester, Mass.: Unwin Hyman, 1988.
- The Politics of Capital Investments: The Case of Philadelphia.* Carolyn Teich Adams. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1988.
- The Population of European Cities: Data Bank and a Short Summary of Results, 800-1850.* Paul Bairoch et al. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1988.
- Regional and Metropolitan Growth and Decline in the United States.* William H. Frey and Alden Spence, Jr. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1988.
- The Rise of the Community Builders: The American Real Estate Industry and Urban Land Planning.* Marc A. Weiss. New York: Columbia University Press, 1987.
- Social and Economic Development: An Introduction.* Tony Barnett. New York: Guilford Press, 1989.
- The Third World: States of Mind and Being.* Jim Norwine and Alfonzo Gonzalez, eds. Winchester, Mass.: Unwin Hyman, 1988.
- Transport in Victorian Britain.* Michael J. Freeman and Derek H. Aldcroft, Editors. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988.
- Urban Historical Geography: Recent Progress in Britain and Germany.* Dietrich Denecke and Gareth Shaw, Editors. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.
- Urbanization and Urban Policies in Pacific Asia.* Roland J. Fuchs et al, eds. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1988.
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