

Urban Geography Specialty Group Newsletter

Assoc. of American Geographers

<http://geog.uwm.edu/ugsg>

Vol. 24, No. 2

August, 2003

Letter From the Chair

This newsletter is positioned between the two annual meetings of the AAG and is an opportunity to both report on the last meeting and anticipate the next. First, I would like to congratulate the **2003 recipients of the UGSG thesis and paper awards**. **Yeon-Taek Ryu** was awarded the dissertation prize for his thesis completed at the University of Minnesota, entitled, 'Housing Markets and Geographical Scale: Korean Cities in the 1980s and 1990s'; and **Kristina Gibson** (University of Colorado) was awarded a prize for her master thesis, entitled "Eleven Thousand Vacant Lots, Why Take Our Garden Plots?" Community Garden Preservation Strategies in NYC's Gentrified Lower East Side,' completed at Penn State. **Dan Trudeau** (Ph.D. candidate at the University of Colorado) won the student essay competition, and **Caleb Johnston** (University of British Columbia) was awarded the Glenda Laws undergraduate paper award.

At the moment, the deadlines for next year's competitions seem well off in the future, but I ask instructors and supervisors to begin now to **encourage students to apply for these prizes**. As you teach urban geography courses throughout the autumn, please watch out for those excellent term papers that could be submitted to the Glenda Laws Undergraduate Paper competition. Undergraduate students are very unlikely to take the initiative of submitting their paper on their own (or even to know about such an opportunity) but it is a wonderful way to encourage students. I can tell you that Caleb's award generated a 'buzz' amongst our undergraduates and prompted several top students to come to my office to discuss other possibilities of this sort.

The Board does want to clarify some fairly straightforward guidelines around these competitions. These are that the same paper or thesis should not be submitted to more than one specialty group and only one prize should be sought for the same work (*i.e.*, it is not appropriate to submit the same work for both the paper and thesis competitions.)

Graduate students should also be alerted to the **specialty group funds available to students presenting papers at the annual AAG meetings**. Last year we were able to allocate \$75 each to 11 graduate students, not a princely sum but some help toward the considerable expenses associated with the meetings.

Closer to the conference, look for details about applying for these funds on the UGSG website.

At the last AAG annual meeting in New Orleans, discussion arose over **the issue of lobbying the AAG to put a system in place to lower the costs for, and hence enable, the participation of non-AAG members at annual meetings**. In the case of our specialty group, we are especially interested in changes that would allow members of the local community to participate in panels that would inform us about issues and processes in the immediate urban context. One proposal is that the AAG allocate a number of vouchers (say 4) to each specialty group. Each could be used to 'buy' a non-AAG member's participation in a single session at the meetings and would enable specialty groups to put together the type of panels of community participants that we are envisioning. **Please contact me and give me some feedback on this general scenario**. We plan to post a proposal on the website, ask for further feedback, and then initiate a process of lobbying the AAG Council.

Looking forward to the next annual meetings in Philadelphia, I encourage everyone to consider organizing urban-themed sessions. We sponsored 45 excellent sessions at the New Orleans meetings (with the skillful coordination of Steve Holloway and David Prytherch). For example, Judith Kenny and Loretta Lees organized two very successful panels that brought together representatives from the AAG and IBG urban geography specialty groups. The substance of these panels will be published in *Urban Geography*. Papers from sessions on Urban Geography in the 1980s and 1990s were also very well attended and are soon to be published in *Urban Geography*. Calls for a fascinating array of sessions follow within this newsletter. **Board members, Yu Zhou (yuzhou@vassar.edu) and David Prytherch (dlp@u.arizona.edu), have agreed to coordinate the specialty group sponsorship of sessions, so please contact them with ideas about sessions, requests for sponsorship, or an update of session themes. The deadline for submitting abstracts to the AAG is October 9th.**

For now, I wish you the best for the remaining days of summer.

Geraldine Pratt

University of British Columbia, gpratt@geog.ubc.ca

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From the Editor

I hope that you find this latest issue of the newsletter helpful. One of my favorite sections of the current letter is the contribution from Meghan Cope about departmental goings on at SUNY-Buffalo (pg.7). This newsletter could be a wonderful venue for us to keep each other updated on the research and pedagogic efforts of our various collegiate departments and **I encourage all of you to submit departmental news to future newsletters.** With that in mind, I hope to be hearing from many of you for our next issue of the newsletter in November. Good luck with your session organizing and you'll hear from me again in the fall.

Margaret Hudson
Newsletter Editor
mahudson@uga.edu

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gpratt@geog.ubc.ca

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kmitch@u.washington.edu

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lmccarth@uwm.edu

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mountz@interchange.ubc.ca

CALLS FOR PAPERS: PHILADELPHIA AAG ANNUAL CONFERENCE, MARCH 14 - 19, 2003

Topic: The Contexts of Racial and Ethnic Identity Formation, Negotiation, and Performance

Contact: Margaret Hudson, Dept. of Geography, University of Georgia, mahudson@uga.edu, (310) 581-3817 or Rob Yarbrough, ryarbrou@uga.edu, Dept. of Geography, University of Georgia

We are organizing a session or sessions that examine the urban contexts of racial and ethnic identity development, negotiation, and performance. We seek participants that are interested in the interplay of various urban contextual scales -- those of body, the household and family, the neighborhood, the school, the town, the metropolitan area, and/or the region, *etc.* -- upon the formation and expression of personal and/or familial racial and ethnic identities. Topics of interest to presenters include but are not limited to:

- immigration and identity development within or between various urban contexts,
- the racial and ethnic identifications of children of immigrants or American ethnic and racial minorities,
- situational or contextual influences on racial and/or ethnic identity performance and self-identification,
- the interplay between various scales of identity formation and performance,
- the household and/or family as a racialized unit and "actor" negotiating racialized city space,
- the racialized household as an intermediate contextual site for individual identity development.

Interested potential participants are asked to please **contact Margaret Hudson (mahudson@uga.edu) or Robert Yarbrough (ryarbrou@uga.edu) by September 24, 2003** for inclusion in these sessions. Finalized abstracts and AAG PIN numbers must be sent to session organizers by **October 1, 2003**. Thank you for your interest.

Topic: Urban Identity and Place Promotion

Contact: Sarah Loy, Graduate School of Geography, Clark University, 950 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01610, (508) 793-7525 (office), (508) 793-8881 (fax), SLOY@clarku.edu

My name is Sarah Loy, and I'm a PhD student in geography at Clark University. I'm organizing a paper session for the Philadelphia AAG around the issues of urban identity and place promotion. The paper I

would like to present is entitled, "Contested Identities: Salt Lake City and the Winter Olympics". There are a few of us planning on presenting thus far. A rough abstract of my paper follows. Please contact me if interested, and please pass this on if you know someone who might like to be involved.

Abstract:

Salt Lake City' s identity has long stood as a "Mormon Zion". Through an analysis of media reports about the 2002 Winter Olympic Games, I hope to show that Salt Lake' s traditional identity was contested. In an attempt to appeal to tourists and a consumer-based society as a whole, city leaders capitalized on a long-standing tradition of place promotion in urban areas. An attempt was made to represent Salt Lake City as a largely secular urban center with a vast array of services. This attempt needs to be examined in the ongoing research on the significance that place promotion has in understanding the post-industrial turn in capitalist society.

Topic: Geographies of Alternative Development

Contact: Kathryn Davis, San Jose State University, Geography, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0116, (408) 924-5485, mkdavis@SBCGLOBAL.NET

I am organizing a session on alternative development in rural communities for the 2004 AAG. My own work focuses on the sustainability of pond/tank aquaculture systems operating at the scale of family or community. I invite papers on a range of issues within the broad category of alternative development. If interested, please contact me.

Topic: Geographies of the American Urban South

Contact: Heather Smith, University of North Carolina at Charlotte – Heatsmit@email.uncc.edu or William Graves, University of North Carolina at Charlotte - bgraves@email.uncc.edu

While the American South has long been recognized as culturally unique, geographers have largely ignored the distinctive spatial aspects of Southern cities. Although recent urban research has begun to recognize the exceptionality of small and mid-sized cities, scant attention has been given to the regional historical, cultural, social and economic factors that make Southern cities unusual in the national and global contexts. This oversight is problematic as the cultural and economic identity of the South (e.g. the New South) becomes increasingly urban. In addition to

providing a showcase for studies of Southern urban geography, it is hoped that papers in this session will serve to integrate studies of Southern (and mid-sized) cities into the broader context of human geography. Paper topics may include (but are not limited to):

- a. The integration of Southern cities in the global economy
- b. Sprawl in Southern cities
- c. Post-Suburban development in Southern cities
- d. Revitalization in Southern cities
- e. Southern urban politics
- f. Historic evolution of Southern cities
- g. Migration to Southern cities

For further information and expressions of interest, please contact either William Graves or Heather Smith by **October 1st, 2003**. Participants in the special session will need to register online at www.aag.org before October 6th, 2003 and promptly email the Program Identification Number (PIN) and paper title to William Graves at bgraves@email.uncc.edu.

Topic: Radical Body Politics

Contact: Matt Sothern, Dept. of Geography, University of Washington, msothern@u.washington.edu or Claire Rasmussen, University of Delaware

This paper session addresses the renewed interest in the body as a site of transgressive politics in areas including feminist, post-colonial, queer, anti-racist, and disability studies. Geographers in particular have an important role in shaping our theoretical understanding of the materiality of the body as a space of the political and the body placed within the political. We are seeking for papers exploring the primacy of the body as constitutive of the political, locating particular bodies in particular places that challenge both the political as presently constituted as well as how these bodies might challenge how we imagine the political more generally. Topics might include:

- a: Relationship between deviant bodies and hegemonic political claims
- b: The limits of liberal universalism in relationship to particular bodies
- c: The transgressive potential of particular bodies marked by gender, race, sexuality, age, disability

We would like to ask that potential abstracts for this session are sent to Matt Sothern (msothern@u.washington.edu) by **Friday, September 19th** so that we can contact participants in time for the

AAG submission deadline of October 9th. If you have any questions or suggestions for this session please do not hesitate to contact Matt Sothern.

Topic: Geographies of Muslim Identities (seeking panel participants)

Contact: Mei-Po Kwan, Ohio State University, kwan.8@osu.edu, or Peter Hopkins, Edinburgh University, UK, peh@geo.ed.ac.uk

Given the recent interest in Muslim identities in all areas of social science research, this panel session hopes to bring together both established academics and postgraduate researchers interested in the geographies of Muslim identities. Research may focus on any aspect of Muslim identities from a variety of international, national and/or local perspectives. Panel participants may be interested in how the geographies of Muslim identities intersect with gender, race, ethnicity, class, sexuality and so on (although these points are by no means exhaustive).

If you would be interested in participating in this panel please send a short abstract (100 words) to the organizers by **September 19th, 2003**.

Topic: Landscape, Planning, and Social Change

Contact: Mark Adams, Dept. of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 384 Science Hall, 550 N Park St., Madison, WI 53706, mdadams@wisc.edu

Are you thinking about presenting a paper that examines linkages among these topics for the AAG next year? My own has an environmental / land use planning bent, but multiple topical perspectives and/or research methods could potentially be welcome. For more information, or to express your interest, please contact Mark Adams.

Topic: Cultural Globalization and the City

Contact: Lisa Benton-Short, Marie Price Department of Geography, The George Washington University, lbenton@gwu.edu or John R. Short, Department of Geography, University Maryland Baltimore County

The ranking of world-city status has tended to focus on economic and financial measurements. One area that remains under-studied in global cities research is the impact of cultural globalization. This session will focus on exploring ways to measure the impact of various types of cultural globalization trends and dynamics. For example, London, New York and

Tokyo rank as the top tier global cities in most globalization indexes. But how would Tokyo rank if the index considered immigrant flows or the diversity of the urban population? Similarly, cities not ranked highly in economic indicators might rate well with regard to cultural festivals and the import/export of popular culture. If cultural globalization is to be taken as an important indicator of world-city status, as we think it should, we need to explore ways to include these in the existing globalization indexes. We welcome abstracts that address this emerging area of global cities research on the following themes:

- a: immigration flows and the diversity of the urban population
- b: cosmopolitanism
- c: popular culture (film, literature, television, art)
- d: the flow of information and ideas
- e: cultural festivals (World' s Fair, Mardi Gras, Carnival, film festivals, etc)
- f: sporting events (Olympic Games, World Cup)
- g: the cultural economy (promoting heritage tourism and unique cultural attributes)

Please send abstracts to Lisa Benton-Short no later than Friday, **September 19, 2003**.

Topic: Encouraging Sessions on the Status of Women in Geography

Contact: Mei-Po Kwan, kwan.8@osu.edu or other members of the AAG Committee on the Status of Women in Geography (CSWG)

From Mei-Po Kwan: The AAG Committee on the Status of Women in Geography (CSWG) will continue to play a supporting and coordinating role for organized sessions on the status of women and minorities in geography at the 2004 annual meeting (March 14-19, Philadelphia).

I would like to encourage sessions or papers that examine issues pertinent to the interests of CSWG, GPOW and SWIGs (Supporting Women in Geography). Please let me know if you' re interested in convening sessions or seeking CSWG sponsorship in this connection. The AAG CSWG members in 2003-04 are:

- Sharmistha Bagchi-Sen, (SUNY-Buffalo)
- Altha Cravey, (University of North Carolina)
- Dorothy Freidel, (Sonoma State University)
- Mei-Po Kwan, (Ohio State University)
- Pamela J. Moss, (University of Victoria)
- Cynthia Pope, (Central Connecticut State University)
- Judy Walton, (Portland State University)

**Topic: Joint Session with the Coastal and Marine
Specialty Group.**

Contact: Diane Horn, School of Geography, Birkbeck
College, University of London, d.horn@bbk.ac.uk.

**Topic: Places of (P)leisure, But Where's the Pain?:
Sexualities, Space, and Power**

Contact: Kath Browne, Division of Geography, The
School of the Environment, University of Brighton,
Cockcroft Building, Lewes Road, Brighton, BN2 4GJ,
UK. Tel: +44 (0) 1273 642377, K.A.Browne@
brighton.ac.uk or Jason Limm, Department of
Geography, University College London, 26 Bedford
Way, London WC1H 0AP, UK, Tel: +44 (0) 20 7679
5527, jason.lim@ucl.ac.uk

Recently geographies of sexualities have drawn upon
queer theories that explore the fluidity and multiplicity
of sexualities. Beyond discourse, and beyond the
mutability of the body, there are still questions of
power. Theories of embodiment, performance and
performativity have been deployed to de-stabilize the
'naturalness' of heterosexual spaces through an
examination of sexualised practices. Relations of
power are (re)enacted through, and (re)create, social
norms, regulations, institutions, places, bodies and
practices. In order to (re) explore the material potential
for subversion, transgression, resistance, contingency,
disruptions, disjunctures and 'failed' performativities,
the fluidity offered by queer theories and practices
needs to be (re)integrated with the stuff of our daily
lives.

This session seeks to develop a dialogue between
cultural and social geographies through a discussion of
the lived, practiced and embodied sexualising of
leisure spaces, and the leisure spaces of sexualities.
Constitutive of such spaces are the interplay of
regulatory practices with affective geographies. Bodies
become placed into various affective relations between
and beyond attraction and repulsion, and dominance
and submissiveness. We need to ask how pleasure,
pain and power are implicated within one another.
Such sexualised and affective geographies intersect
with other dimensions of power such as race, ethnicity,
class, gender and social and cultural capital.

Contributions are sought that explore empirically,
theoretically or emotionally/affectively the pleasure
and pain of:

- a: Spaces of sexualities and sex
- b: Queer contestations and transgressions
- c: Practices and performativities of sexualities
- d: Sexual identities, embodiments and places

- e: Affective, intimate and sensual geographies and
politics
- f: Bars, nightclubs, and other sexualised 'night' spaces
- g: Pride, festivals, concerts and other regular and
irregular places of (p)leisure
- h: Institutions such as school, church, government,
media
- i: Sites of sexualities and places of tourist (p)leisure
- j: Researching sex and sexualities
- k: Everyday life and the mundane 'stuff' of
sexualities

For further information and expressions of interest,
please contact us at the above email addresses.
Abstracts of up to 250 words to be sent by **September
12th 2003**; Presenter Identification Numbers to be sent
by **September 26th 2003**.

**CALL FOR PAPERS –
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
CONFERENCE**

DEADLINE – SEPTEMBER, 19, 2003

Dear Colleague:

We are pleased to announce the **Wellesley Centers for
Women 2004 International Research and Action
Conference, Innovations in Understanding Violence
Against Women**. The conference is being held in
Wellesley, Massachusetts in the northeastern United
States (Boston area). The event will take place April
25-28, 2004 and is designed for researchers, activists,
advocates and practitioners from the academic, NGO,
CBO and government domains who incorporate
research in their work toward ending violence against
women.

The major focus of this conference will be to advance
the understanding of violence against women by
sharing, demonstrating and promoting innovative
concepts and research methodologies from around the
world.

We would like to invite you to submit a proposal for
presentation at the upcoming event. The conference
will include the presentation and discussion of
findings and successful approaches to contextually
relevant
research in the understanding of violence against
women in the northern and southern hemispheres. It
will be designed around field-initiated paper
presentation sessions and roundtable discussions. The
program will

also include plenary talks by internationally renowned experts. Our underlying goal is to foster participatory and collaborative interaction among participants from around the globe.

The submission deadline for abstracts is **September 19, 2003**. We encourage you to visit our website www.wcwonline.org/conference, where you will find further conference details including examples of topics of interest. You will also find a form to submit your abstract online. We look forward to your participation. If you have questions or comments please feel free to e-mail us at WCW-InternationalResearch@wellesley.edu.

Sincerely,
Linda M. Williams, Victoria L. Banyard, and Nada Aoudeh, Conference Co-Chairs
Valerie McSorley, Conference Coordinator

**CALL FOR PAPER SUBMISSIONS -
/thirdspace/ SPECIAL ISSUE ON
REPRESENTATION AND
TRANSGRESSIVE SEXUALITIES**

DEADLINE - OCTOBER 1, 2003

The editors of the premier journal for emerging feminist scholars, [/thirdspace/](http://thirdspace/), invite you to contribute your work for our March 2004 special issue on representation and transgressive sexualities. We encourage submissions that focus on (but are not restricted to) the following themes: monstrous women; the femme fatale; deviant, transgressive, and subversive sexualities; and future landscapes of sexualities. Explorations are especially welcomed on how these themes can be understood in the larger context of representation. Papers examining additional themes linked to representation and transgressive sexualities are also appreciated.

[/thirdspace/](http://thirdspace/) is an on-line journal committed to the promotion of new feminist work in all areas of study. Our mandate is to produce atop-quality, refereed journal that demonstrates the broad range of applications for feminist theory and methodology, as well as gives emerging feminist scholars a venue for their work. This journal is a collaborative effort that brings together a wide range of students and scholars from a variety of disciplines to foster a strong, innovative presence for feminist studies in the emerging-scholar community and beyond. [/thirdspace/](http://thirdspace/) is published electronically twice a year, in March and November.

Submissions should be original work done while an 'emerging scholar': graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, new independent scholar, junior professional (up to five years), or a similar status. We welcome submissions in English, French, German, Spanish, and Arabic; we will also consider submissions in other languages. All articles are peer-reviewed by established, senior feminist scholars. We require an electronic copy of your submission. (A paper copy should be sent upon request only.) Submissions should be between 4000-6500 words (about 15 to 25 pages), prepared in MLA format, and include an abstract and a brief biographical note which will be posted on the members section of the site. Please see our submissions guide (www.thirdspace.ca/submit.htm) for full details.

Submissions should be sent to submissions@thirdspace.ca. Deadline for submission is October 1, 2003.

For further information please visit the journal at <http://www.thirdspace.ca>.

From: Karen Dias, dias0004@umn.edu, Associate Editor, thirdspace

**CALL FOR PAPER SUBMISSIONS -
WOMEN & ENVIRONMENTS
INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE,
SPECIAL ISSUE ON CITIES FOR
WOMEN**

**DEADLINE - INDICATION OF
INTEREST/ABSTRACT BY OCT. 1, 2003,
MANUSCRIPTS BY JAN. 15, 2004**

Women & Environments International Magazine is looking for submissions from North, South, aboriginal and minority communities around the world. We are looking for analyses, theories, cross cultural comparisons, creative initiatives, projects, processes, poetry and art that address women's concerns/needs in creating communities which better serve women and their multiple roles and responsibilities. Submissions can address:

- a. HOUSING - property rights, financing, security of tenure, design, supply of affordable housing, homelessness, shelters innovative projects and ideas,
- b. COMMUNITY PLANNING - planning to encourages diversity, accessibility, integration of functions, density for affordability, planning for safety of

- persons not only property, women' s access to the planning process,
- c. SERVICES - health, children, aging, recreation, refuge from violence, education, arts, community economic development, jobs, waste disposal, right to clean air, water and energy,
 - d. TRANSPORTATION - support for transit, bicycling, walking, and animals,
 - e. SUSTAINABILITY - of our livelihoods, food, environment, air, water, and energy,
 - f. GOVERNANCE – women' s ability to fully participate in all aspects of governance,
 - g. URBAN DESIGN – gender sensitive design of cityscapes and structures

Writers Guidelines Are on our Website, www.weimag.com ,under participate.

Departmental and Community News

From Tobias Dietrich, tobias.dietrich@gmx.at, www.planum.net:

Available now - The update of the online archive of the 4th Biennial of Towns and Town Planners in Europe.

The 4th Biennial of Towns and Town Planners in Europe was held in Rotterdam in 2001 and discussed the topic "Cultures of Cities - Transformations generating new opportunities". The meeting was a successful event involving a lot of town planners and a number of very good projects from more than 40 European cities. The meeting gave rise to the idea of creating a virtual gallery disseminating information on the presented projects - divided into the 4 categories ' Global Forces' , ' Cultural Heritage' , ' Cultural Identities' & ' Street Life' and on the congress itself (mainly workshops & excursions). This panorama of transformations in European cities can be accessed online via <http://www.planum.net/4bie> .

News from Buffalo, NY, - Research in Progress ... sent by Meghan Cope (mcope@acsu.buffalo.edu)

Several exciting urban projects are underway at the **Department of Geography, SUNY-Buffalo** these days, all of which involve research in and around the City of Buffalo, are informed by feminist/anti-racist frameworks, and involve qualitative research methods. A brief account of these projects shows both the diversity of topics and the common ground of interest

in urban social geography, mixed methods, and social justice.

Jennifer Halfhill (Ph.D. student) has been working for Meghan Cope on her project, which involves multiple method explorations with children ages 8 through 12 who attend a Boys & Girls Club on the Lower West Side of Buffalo. Jennifer is also pursuing her interest in youth geographies through a project involving youth responses to a local mall's recently enacted prohibition of anyone under 18 (without a parent/guardian) from being in the mall at certain evening and weekend times.

Jacquie Housel (Ph.D. candidate) is in the final stages of her research on ways that place and race are mutually constituted in this highly segregated city. She has observed city-wide discussions on racial profiling, conducted focus groups and personal interviews, and solicited travel diaries from several different population groups to explore their racialized senses of place. These groups include: African-American parents of teens to see what they tell their children about safe and dangerous spaces, young African-American adults to see how their family and work lives are bounded or opened by racial practices (particularly with regard to white suburbs and police profiling), and elderly whites living in 'their' neighborhoods that are now almost all African-American to see how their daily activity spaces are shaped by racialized perceptions. In this way, Jacquie hopes to capture a sense of the relationship between the social/institutional regulation of urban space and how individuals give racialized meanings to space.

Jin-Kyu Jung (Ph.D. student) is in the beginning stages of a project to explore the different, and often opposing, meaning of 'community'. He has been working as an intern at a community-based organization in the Fillmore-LeRoy area of Buffalo, a primarily African-American neighborhood, which has negative images such as being dangerous. In exchange for his work (which includes some GIS and website development), he has been doing participant observations and interviews with the people who come to this organization. He is concentrating on the meaning of community from the perspective of people who actually live in a marginalized area, and exploring the influence of race, class, gender, and age in forming these perceptions.

LaDona Knigge (Ph.D. candidate) is exploring the 'emerging public spaces' of vacant lots in the diverse low-income neighborhoods of the Lower West Side of Buffalo. Through both grassroots and city-administration initiatives, vacant lots are increasingly

being used for (potentially) empowering projects such as community gardens and other forms of economic development. LaDona's work involves new and innovative ways of combining qualitative research with GIS and she is assessing the ontological and practical issues arising from that combination as part of her project.

Meghan Cope (Associate Professor) is working on her project "Children's Urban Geographies", funded by the NSF's CAREER program. The goals of the project are to learn more about how low-income, racially diverse children conceptualize urban social and physical space, and to incorporate this knowledge into new instruction materials for the 8-12 year old age group on urban geography. Meghan is coordinating with a local after-school program and will teach a 'service-learning' course at SUNY-Buffalo this fall in which university students will run short projects with the after-school program's children.

News of New Research, Awards/Grants, Moves and Hires

Congratulations to ... Eugene McCann. He is leaving Ohio State for a new position in the dept of geography at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada. Good luck Eugene.

Congratulations to ... Soe W. Myint, University of Oklahoma, **Xiaojun Yang** (xyang@uwf.edu), Florida State University, and **Qing Shen**, University of Maryland, College Park, **won a \$80,000 grant from the Institute for Advanced Education in Geospatial Sciences** at the University of Mississippi, through a national open competition. This grant is part of NASA funding to develop a web-based educational curriculum in remote sensing. It will be used to develop a dynamic distance-learning course highlighting the application of remote sensing and GIS technologies for the management and planning of community growth. This course is targeted to support NASA Earth System Science National Applications.

Reconstructing Chilean Cities ... work in progress by **Hugo Zunino**, Ph.D. (c), ABD, University of Arizona Department of Geography and Regional Development, University of Roskilde, Denmark, Invited Researcher zunino@email.arizona.edu

From Hugo: Using Chile's bicentennial celebration (2010) as a discursive tool, certain state agents have been empowered to intervene in the

reconstruction of distinctive portion urban places. In cities like Iquique, Valparaiso, Santiago, Valdivia, Concepción places are being rebuilt by new institutions that can exercise power to by-pass traditional planning agencies. Even that the changes on the move will affect people, their ways of life and their immediate environment, it is surprising the lack of interest-bearing debate and resistance. To explain this situation several factors should be considered, here I will mention only two. First, the discursive space is saturated with the commonly accepted premise that urban changes are related to "progress" and becoming a "developed" nation. Second, although calls for public participation are customary in the public arena, ordinary citizens lack effective channels to make their voices count, limiting participation to formal instance with little or no resources to challenge decisions made by the central state actors. These factors are useful to decipher power structures generated by those holding strategic positions and to elucidate how certain actors are excluded in processes of urban change.