

RGS-IBG Social and Cultural Geography Research Group AGM 2012
Tuesday 2nd July 2012, RGS Edinburgh, Room TRH-COM

Minutes

Present: Gail Davies (Chair), Chris Bear (Acting Treasurer), Amanda Rogers, Sarah Mills, Mia Hunt, Pete Adey, Paul Simpson, Tara Woodyer, James Ash, Hannah Macpherson, Rebecca Sandover, Ben Anderson, Franklin Ginn, Leila Dawney

1) Apologies for absence

Russell Hitchings (Secretary), Jo Norcup, Emma Roe, Harriet Hawkins

2) Chair's report

GD noted that this would be her final report as SCGRG Chair. She began by outlining the Group's strengths, notably that it remains one of the RGS's largest Research Groups with around 460 members, is currently around £2000 in credit, has a good communications network (with an active website and regular Facebook and Twitter updates). She thanked the rest of the committee for its ideas, event-organisation and enthusiasm during her time as Chair. She also commended the intellectual strength of the committee.

Two particular challenges were outlined:

1. The RGS is currently discussing potential concern over the proliferation of research groups. She questioned whether concern around this could be overstated, as although some new groups have been formed, others have been disbanded. However, some of the new groups occupy spaces traditionally covered by the SCGRG, such as those on justice, sexualities, children and so forth, which does raise challenges. The RGS is currently discussing a paper about the future direction of research groups, and the SCGRG should expect to be consulted on this.
2. Financial state of institutions. It was noted that the SCGRG currently has an events fund, but there have been no applications in the past year, in spite of the current difficult financial situation across many universities. There was some discussion around this point, with suggestions that it might be possible to supplement SCGRG funds with match-funding from the RGS. The availability of funding from the HEA was also highlighted.

Reporting on highlights of the SCGRG's past year, the Chair discussed the group's focus in preparing for this year's RGS-IBG conference, especially as the conference took place earlier this year than usual. As such, she thanked the sub-group that organised the two sessions on *Social and Cultural Geographies of Impact* (Chris Bear, Mia Hunt, Sarah Mills, Amanda Rogers and Rebecca Sandover), and thanked Ben Anderson for organising the session on *Social and Cultural*

Geographies of Crisis. More sessions were sponsored than had originally been allocated to the SCGRG, which reflected the diversity and quality of proposals submitted. GD thanked everyone who had been involved in reviewing the proposals.

Ben Anderson proposed thanks to GD for her intellectual and organisational input to the SCGRG over the past three years; this was echoed by all present.

3) Treasurer's Report

Chris Bear (Acting Treasurer) reported that the Group's finances are healthy, with around £2000 currently available. Since the last AGM, the main income has been the RGS-IBG subvention (£500), while the main expenditure has been around £100 on committee travel for a conference planning meeting. The Group has known commitments of around £175, including £150 for the forthcoming dissertation prizes. A spreadsheet of the annual and interim accounts is provided as an appendix to these minutes.

4) Changes in Committee Membership

A number of committee members reached the end of their term this year. Standing down are: Gail Davies (chair), Ben Anderson, Russell Hitchings (secretary), Emma Roe (dissertation coordinator) and Elaine Ho (treasurer). Jo Norcup (education) is also taking a year's maternity leave from the committee.

Proposals had been received prior to the AGM for a number of committee positions. These positions were filled uncontested:

- a) Election of New Chair – Pete Adey
- b) Election of New Secretary – Sarah Mills
- c) Confirm Election of Acting Treasurer to Treasurer – Chris Bear
- d) Re-election of Postgraduate Representatives – Mia Hunt and Rebecca Sandover
- e) Election of Dissertation Co-ordinator – Franklin Ginn
- f) Election of Communications Secretary – James Ash
- g) Election of Ordinary Members – Leila Dawney, Paul Simpson and Tara Woodyer

Sarah Mills agreed to continue as Membership Secretary on an interim basis.

The Chair asked that the previous committee could stay available until September, given how early the AGM has taken place this year.

The new committee, therefore, is comprised of:

- Pete Adey (Chair)
- Sarah Mills (Secretary)
- Chris Bear (Treasurer)
- Franklin Ginn (Dissertation Co-ordinator)
- James Ash (Communications Officer)

- Rebecca Sandover and Mia Hunt (Postgraduate Representatives)
- Amanda Rogers, Harriet Hawkins, Owain Jones, Hannah Macpherson, Tara Woodyer, Paul Simpson and Leila Dawney (Ordinary Committee Members).

5) Proposed research group activities

It was suggested that it would be useful to hold an EGM later in the year to allow more in-depth consideration of future activities. This was agreed; Pete Adey will circulate potential dates shortly.

On a related note, it was observed that the additional time between 2012 and 2013 RGS-IBG conferences allowed more time to work on match funding proposals between the SCGRG and the RGS research group grant.

Pete Adey raised the possibility of exploring the Impact Agenda further, developing the sessions held at this year's conference. The session is already being taken forward as a special issue of *ACME*, but he suggested that the SCGRG might also use this as a platform to build a dialogue with organisations such as the ESRC and RGS. It was agreed that it would be useful to consider this in more detail at the proposed EGM.

There was considerable discussion of the future of the SCGRG Events Fund. It was noted that there had previously been concern about the limited awareness about this fund. It is currently capped at £250. It was questioned whether there would be more appropriate uses of the funding, perhaps including postgraduate and postdoctoral bursaries for conference attendance and suchlike. Gail Davies suggested that the fund might be disbanded. Ben Anderson suggested that the problem is that the cap is too low and questioned whether 'events' is what it should be used for. It was agreed that references to the fund should be removed from the website and that greater consideration to how the funds might be used would be given in the autumn. Gail Davies suggested that it would be useful to speak to Catherine Souch about its role, and that looking at how other research groups allocate funding would be helpful. Amanda Rogers suggested one possibility might be to use the funds to allow more non-academics to attend SCGRG events, also raising the related issue of giving greater promotion of guest passes in the future. These issues will be revisited at the forthcoming EGM.

6) Proposal from Robert Rojek (sage)

A brief presentation was given by Robert Rojek, representing the publishers Sage. He proposed the possibility of the SCGRG sponsoring and co-editing/authoring a new textbook on *Social and Cultural Geographies*. This would be a full colour, multimedia book. 'Reasonable' royalties should be generated, which could be fed back into the Group. He talked of the need to think about the non-UK market, especially in discussing the social-cultural split. He sees this as a potential 'franchise', which would be updated every 3-5 years. It would be aimed primarily at the second year undergraduate market. Rather than being purely topic-focused, he feels it would be good to include a methods component. It would be approximately 250 pages.

In subsequent discussion, the Committee questioned what it might bring the Group. Beyond raising the Group's profile, there is some potential to provide bursaries and suchlike through the royalties generated. Questions were raised, however, about the amount of time required to produce something of this nature, about the role of future committees in subsequent editions and about the need for the book to be an intellectually interesting project.

Hannah Macpherson reminded the committee of a previous SCGRG event that explored the relationships between social and cultural geography. This resulted in a special issue of *Social and Cultural Geography*.

Gail Davies noted that before taking this any further it would be important to consult the RGS, especially in relation to its existing publishing relationship with Wiley-Blackwell. Pete Adey suggested that a decision should be delayed until the next meeting; the committee agreed.

7) AOB

There was no other business.

8) Key dates from RGS:

2012

1. Research Group Grants - deadlines Oct 31st
2. Census date for Research Group subventions November 1st

2013

3. Annual Reports 31st January
4. RGS-IBG Medals and Awards 28th February (please do nominate!)
5. Nomination for Research Group representative to Research Committee 28th February
6. Nominations from Fellows and members for Research Committee/Council membership 31st March (please do then vote!)
7. Next RGS-IBG annual conference Wednesday 28 to Friday 30 August 2013. The conference Chair will be Jonathan Rigg (Durham) and the theme 'New Geographical Frontiers'. Key dates for the research group are:
 - i) October 2012 Call for Papers
 - ii) End of February 2013 deadline for Research Group sessions
8. Date of next meeting sometime 28-30 August 2013

Appendix – Annual and Interim Accounts

Research Group financial reporting form

Research Group Name Social and Cultural Geography

Period 1.1.11-31.12.11

Receipt and payments account

INCOME

RGS-IBG subvention 500

RGS-IBG grant(s) 0

Other grants 0

Subscriptions 0

Conference income 405

Meetings income 0

Royalties 0

Interest 0.59

Other income (please give details) 0

EXPENDITURE

Committee expenses 63.7

Conference costs 1297.25

Meetings costs 0

Newsletter costs 0

Grants and awards 486.05

Other costs (postage) 9.84

Total payments **1856.84**

Net surplus/deficit -951.25

Opening balance(s) - 1st January 2011 3048.67

(or alternative date)

Closing balances - 31st December 2011 2097.42

Closing balances comprised of:

treasurer account 2097.42

deposit account

It would help if you gave the additional information for BACS payments

Address of branch where accounts are held The Co-operative Bank

Account number(s) 65292523 00

Sort code 89299

Name of treasurer Christopher Bear

Email address of Treasurer ckb@aber.ac.uk

Interim accounts, June 2012

Opening balance - 1st January 2012	2097.42
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INCOME

Interest	0.27
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EXPENDITURE

IBG Planning meeting - committee travel	103.1
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Closing balance - 29th June 2012	1994.59
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KNOWN COMMITMENTS

Dissertation prize	150
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Expenses for impact session materials	25.84
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