
SPRING 2022

Place and Culture

*The Newsletter of the Cultural Geography Specialty Group of
the American Association of Geographers*





In This Issue

- **Message from the Chair, Hannah Gunderman | page 3**
- **2021-2022 Executive Board of the CGSG | page 4**
- **Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies | page 5**
- **A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College | page 12**
- **Celebrating Accomplishments in the CGSG Community! | page 17**
- **CGSG Keynote, Business Meeting, Elections, and Awards at AAG 2022 | page 21**
- **Just for Fun: Cultural Geography-Themed Game! | page 25**
- **Stay in Touch with CGSG! | page 26**

Message from the Chair, Hannah Gunderman

Hello CGSG! You may notice that this issue of *Place and Culture* looks a bit different from past releases! Well, this year certainly looks a bit different from past years, too. As we continue to navigate the challenging circumstances we encounter during the pandemic, we at CGSG wanted to release a version of the newsletter centered around joy and celebration - from celebrating the meaning of cultural geography, to highlighting the accomplishments of members of our community, to bringing a special focus on those in the field enriching the experiences of students in cultural geography, to some de-stressing games. We hope you enjoy this issue of *Place and Culture*!



2021-2022 Executive Board of the CGSG

Chair

(2021-2023)

Hannah Gunderman
Carnegie Mellon University

Secretary/Treasurer

(2021-2023)

Emma Walcott-Wilson
The University of Central Oklahoma

Program Director

(2020-2022)

Tyler Sonnichsen
Central Michigan University

Nominations Director

(2020-2022)

Mark Rhodes
Michigan Technological University

Awards Director

(2021-2023)

Christabel Devadoss
Middle Tennessee State University

Past CGSG Chair

(Ex-Officio)

Matt Cook
Eastern Michigan University

Graduate Student Representative

(2020-2022)

Muriel Marseille
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

Graduate Student Representative

(2021-2023)

Gabriel Espinoza Rivera
West Virginia University

Graduate Student Representative

(2020-2022)

Josh Merced
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies



Hello from the CGSG Grad Representatives!

We are honored to have served as the team of graduate representatives for the Cultural Geography Specialty Group this past year! It has been a challenging, yet rewarding, year. We're grateful for the opportunities to connect with one another and with the broader geographic community as a part of our personal and professional growth, and more grateful for the continued support in our efforts as a team throughout our programming. We invite students at any level, anywhere in the world, and of any sub-discipline, to be actively involved with CGSG and the variety of ways to learn and engage with cultural geography throughout the year and across different platforms. We'd like to share with you a few of our own perspectives about the state of cultural geography, and how it ties into our individual work, interests, and experiences.

continued, page 6

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

Perspectives from Gabriel Espinoza Rivera

How to define or frame our work into Cultural Geography? I don't know for sure, but some ideas come to my mind. As an Anthropologist and Sociologist, particularly interested in Cultural Phenomena, the reflection about space, place and being have been always present in my work. But, before moving into some deeper reflections, what Culture needs is to be treated, at the risk of oversimplifying its definition.

In short, Culture is a concept which tries, as intended recently by Eagleton (2016), to frame what and how people produce both tangible and intangible goods and symbolic hierarchies for them, as well as the practices and ways of living which produce the former.

Thus, what falls into scope of Cultural Geography? From my experience studying abandoned buildings, gentrification processes or childhood geographies, I think there's no possible final answer for it. Maybe, the best way to answer it is by not trying to define it at all, and only coasting its borders. Cultural Geography might be understood as a practice of research with a focus on how people produce and get entangled within their surroundings instead of proposing a structured set of knowledge and topics.

continued, page 7

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

Most of all, **Cultural Geography** is a node of interest, deployed by a diverse variety of methodologies which intend to shed some light about both the relationship between humans and environment, and the production of space and place within these relationships. Space and place being the cultural translation of what surrounds us in a material and symbolic dimension.

Hence, Cultural Geography can be neither detached from other cultural disciplines such as Sociology, Literature or Anthropology nor framed within a particular one of them. Let's think about the work of two anthropologists. Tim Ingold's "The Perception of the Environment" (2000), and Descola's "Par-delà nature et culture (2005). These works helped to shape the phenomenal and cultural understanding of the relationship and entanglement between human people, their surroundings, as well as the materiality and other people that might not be human. How the ways of dwelling and being in the world, can't be detached from cultural ways of seeing, as well as producing rituals that link humanity with those other around them: gardening, animal breeding, farming or other activities, are always embedded in more than a way with the production of a shared environment.

continued, page 8

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

Eventually, we can trace way back to Merleau-Ponty work “Phénoménologie de la perception” (1945) these intents which mingle the capacity of self-reflection of the researcher own umwelt (surroundings) and experience, as well as the ways of seeing/perceive others, to think about how the lebenswelt (life-world) is built upon these relationships. Also, Setha Low’s “Spatializing Culture” (2016) is another excellent example that reunites both the methodologies and theoretical frameworks which helps to understand and to figure out how the relationship between people and space is mediated by different cultural repertoires. Hence, Cultural Geography is something larger than their questions already answered, and even broader to those that are about to be made.

Perspectives from Josh Merced

In the same vein as Gabriel, I imagine and critique themes of cultural geographies as expressed through infrastructure and material consumption. My commitment to integrating topics and methods of interest to the subdiscipline is rooted in my positionality and understanding how I live within the scope of cultural geographies. The marriage between culture, time, and space create endless learning opportunities. But recent events have demonstrated that the learning process can be disrupted or pose unique challenges.

continued, page 9

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

As I'm sure many folx can resonate with, the onset of COVID brought along a shift in work conditions, access to resources, and productivity that required a level of creativity and motivation to respond to. The very nature of being a student can be attributed to a nature of 'problem solving' and being resourceful. For me, 'routine' had empty meaning, and each day brought about new challenges, and continues to do so on whatever trajectory we are on. However, I was surprised by the adverse effect community building had on both my personal and professional network, and the communities my research engaged with. I experienced that the physical disconnect was interchanged with a space where emotional and personal growth took place. I am in a position to recognize that burnout has universal symptoms, but it should not disregard that the most marginalized in the structure of society continue to experience the symptoms at varying degrees. These ramifications of COVID, such as burnout, made an inherently difficult process of dissertating an even more challenging process. The time and energy that could be devoted to data collection and interpretation, writing, and refining skills and techniques often was rerouted to time and energy given to re-establishing a routine and reconsidering methodologies and approaches to one's project.

continued, page 10

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

However, the affirmation I received from peers near and far (mostly far) that I was not the only one experiencing feelings of doubt, disruption, and discomfort as a graduate student renewed the sense of community that I thought was lost in the absence of sharing physical space. I've built networks and close peer relationships with folx that would not exist without the flexibility of virtual meeting spaces. At one point, meetings with leadership teams or working groups I was a part of, such as the Cultural Geography Specialty Group, were moments I was looking forward to for the purpose of feeling renewed and connected. Zoom exhaustion is absolutely valid, and a seemingly unsustainable practice. But in some capacity, it can be a validating space to practice vulnerability, reminding each other that we're humans experiencing human things. I tie this back to how the breadth and depth of cultural geographies can justify experiences and present alternate imaginaries to conventionality.

Conclusion

Cultural geography is an heir, and an epiphenomenon of the study of Culture; those disciplines advocated to understand how social life, and the relationships with socialized beings and space, is mediated by Culture.

continued, page 11

Graduate Student Perspectives: Doing and Thinking about Cultural Geographies, cont.

A Cross between the initial queries made by anthropologists (with all those colonial bias included, and hopefully overcame) regarding the role of space, and the production of place among human societies. And finally, the hierarchies and contested manners to produce and to set what Jacques Rancière will call “The distribution of the sensible”. So, one piece of advice is not to forcefully fit your interests in a narrow frame of questions, but to pay attention to contested dynamics and relationships that might be answered by how space and place are shaped by cultural practices.

Gabriel Espinoza Rivera - PhD Student, *West Virginia University*

Muriel Marseille - PhD Student, *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee*

Josh Merced - PhD Candidate, *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*



Special Feature: A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College

By Hannah Gunderman, CGSG Chair (2021-2023)

Recently, I had the opportunity to have a virtual conversation with Dr. Housel (hereafter Jacquie) and it was truly an honor to learn more about the amazing opportunities that students have at Sinclair Community College (SCC) in geography! Jacquie has been at SCC for 9 years, and during her time at the institution, alongside colleague Dr. Scott Reinemann (Assistant Professor of Geography at SCC), has worked to connect students with transformative learning experiences that will no doubt be of interest to not only cultural geographers but those in other areas of the discipline as well!

SCC is a large, urban community college located in Dayton, Ohio, and much like other community colleges, offers small class sizes which afford many project-oriented activities and 1:1 instructor-student support, institutional characteristics which Jacquie and her colleagues have leveraged to build impressive programs for their students!

“Our community college has a faster pace and an entrepreneurial spirit where we go with the flow, and if you see something or have an idea, we want you to implement it as quickly as possible and go with it! We don’t mind seeing failure - experimentation is good!”

continued, page 13

Special Feature: A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College, cont.

The [Department of Geography](#) at SCC offers all the traditional classes often present in a geography curriculum (such as World Regional Geography) as well as GIS and spatial analysis courses. In Jacquie's courses, she likes getting her students involved in community projects, particularly as many of her students are older and live in the area, so connecting and networking through community projects can be super impactful. In this setting, students work on demonstration projects testing new ideas and initiatives that can help influence economic development and grant-seeking activities for community partners. The [Sinclair Geography Project LibGuide](#) provided through SCC Libraries details these projects, which include diverse topics such as food insecurity, tree canopy assessment, and birding!

Many of these projects are supported through both internal grants and grants from the National Science Foundation, and having the opportunity to participate in these projects has helped the Geography program boost their enrollment numbers. One of the major projects going on right now at Sinclair Community College revolves around redlining, a discriminatory practice that withholds services (such as financial and real estate services) from residents living in certain areas based on race or ethnicity.

continued, page 14

Special Feature: A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College, cont.



In this project, students created maps that show the continued damaging impact of redlining practices on communities in Dayton, reflecting spatial distributions of green spaces, environmental hazards, health equities, and police violence (these maps can be viewed on the Sinclair Geography Project LibGuide under the “[Redlining Maps](#)” tab). With almost 50 maps, this exhibit was developed in collaboration with Sinclair’s 2021 Equity Summit and the Diversity Office.

continued, page 15

Special Feature: A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College, cont.

Since the initial display, this exhibit has been requested by many local community groups. It has become a traveling exhibit and has/will be displayed at local high schools, community conferences, public libraries, and Dayton's International Peace Museum. This has brought incredible visibility to not only the work completed by geography students at Sinclair, but it has also brought visibility to the discipline as a whole as a place where we can better understand the lasting impacts of discriminatory practices on our landscape. These projects are extremely valuable for students who gain impactful work experience that helps them secure jobs in their communities after they graduate.

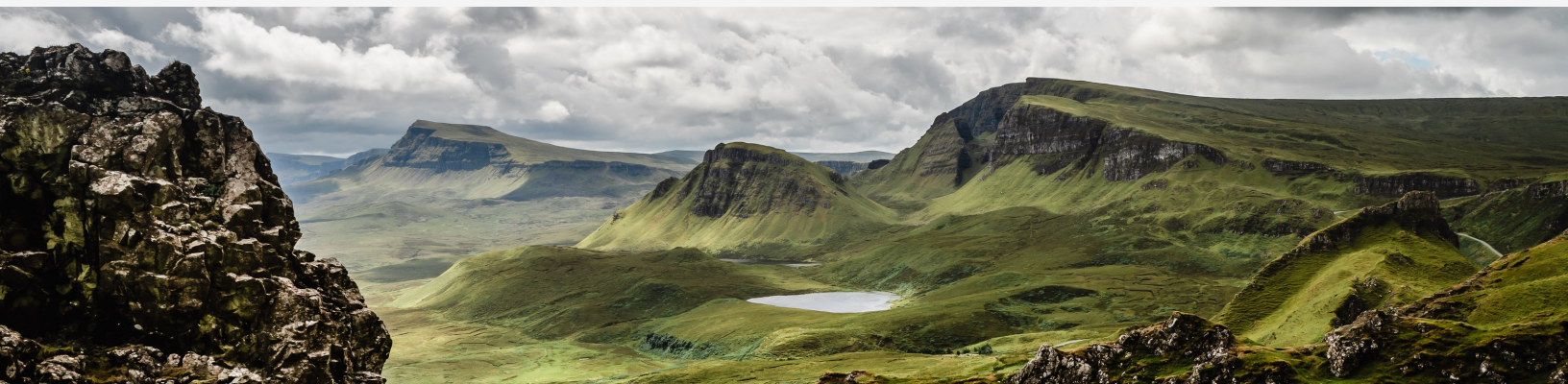
Beyond these engaging community projects, geography students at SCC are exposed to many other rewarding personal and professional growth opportunities. This includes study abroad opportunities, such as the 'GEO 2297: Special Topics-Scotland' course which afforded students the chance to travel to Scotland and learn about environmental sustainability initiatives in the country. In our conversation, Jacquie reflected that this trip helped solidify the students' commitment to geography! Further, their geography faculty always encourage students to attend regional academic conferences, such as the Annual Meetings of the [East Lakes Division](#) of the American Association of Geographers.

continued, page 16

Special Feature: A Conversation with Dr. Jacqueline Housel, Professor/Chair of Geography at Sinclair Community College, cont.

For three years, Jacquie was Chair of this division which helped bring visibility not only to SCC, but it also helped create broader visibility for geographers at community colleges. The students have historically excelled at these conferences, often winning awards for posters and papers, and participating in the Geography Bowls at national meetings. Students have also presented their work at national AAG meetings (such as the 2018 meeting in New Orleans), but having an active presence at these national meetings can be cost-prohibitive.

Towards the end of our conversation, Jacquie reflected on how the students who graduate from SCC by and large go on to do great work in their communities. Jacquie's mission is to highlight what amazing things community colleges can do, and how transformative they can be for the students that attend them! And, as the Cultural Geography Specialty Group, we encourage all geographers to explore what community colleges in your area are doing for geography, and how you might be able to support their efforts!

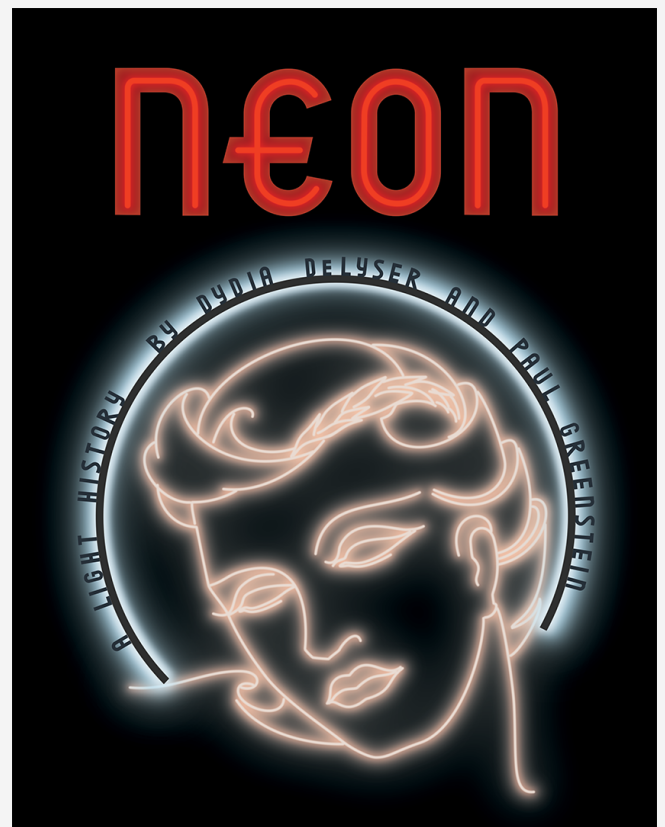


Celebrating Accomplishments in the CGSG Community!

This year in *Place and Culture*, we wanted to highlight the joys and accomplishments felt by members of our community and help celebrate those, particularly considering the challenging times we find ourselves in. Earlier this year we put out an open call for submissions, and we are delighted to feature those submissions here!

Dydia DeLyser, California State University, Fullerton

"Based on collaborative research into how neon signs have transformed the American landscape and shaped American communities, Paul Greenstein and I published a community-based popular book, *Neon: A Light History*. Find out more at www.historyofneon.org"



Celebrating Accomplishments in the CGSG Community!

Jeremiah Osbourne-Gowey, Recent Ph.D. Graduate

Jeremiah Osbourne-Gowey, a CGSG member and first-generation graduate student, successfully completed a pandemic PhD degree in Environmental Studies at CU Boulder in November 2021, navigating numerous dissertation changes necessitated by COVID travel bans, all while never missing a school-related function with his kiddos and tending a relationship with his wife and partner of 24 years. He says, “It was a long and arduous road for our whole family and it feels like a big deal!”

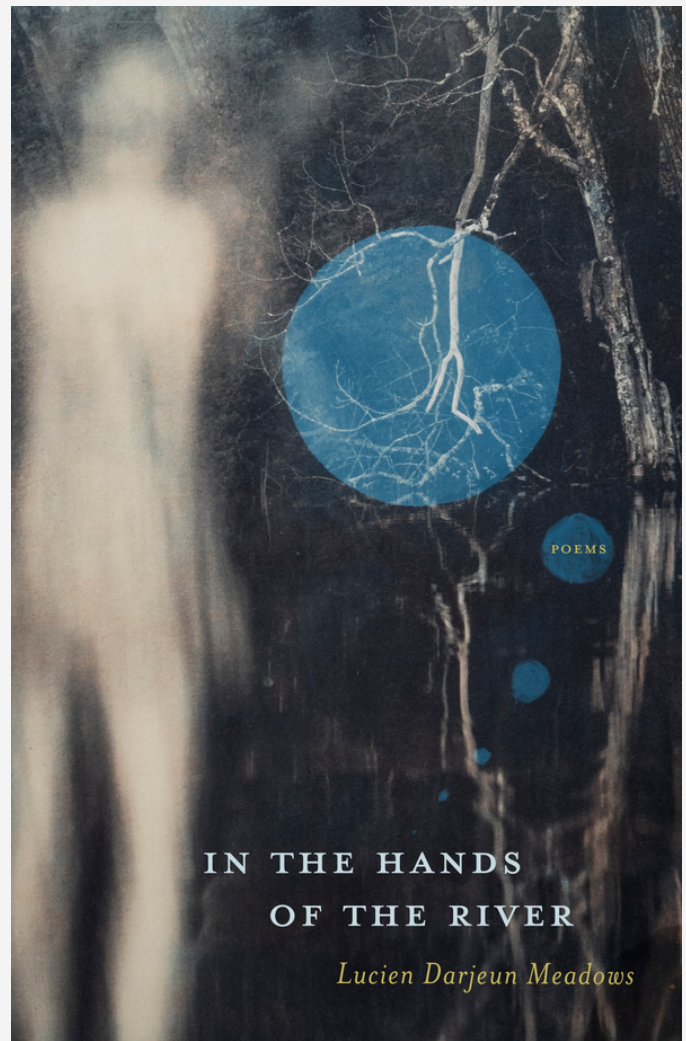


Celebrating Accomplishments in the CGSG Community!

Lucien Darjeun Meadows,
University of Denver

"So happy to share that my first poetry collection, *In the Hands of the River*, is forthcoming September 2022 from Hub City Press! This collection explores the interconnection of human and environmental identity -- specifically the personal and ancestral legacies of trauma and reclamation encountered by a queer boy in a working-class Appalachian family of Cherokee and European descent. Learn more here:

<https://www.hubcity.org/books/poetry/in-the-hands-of-the-river>"

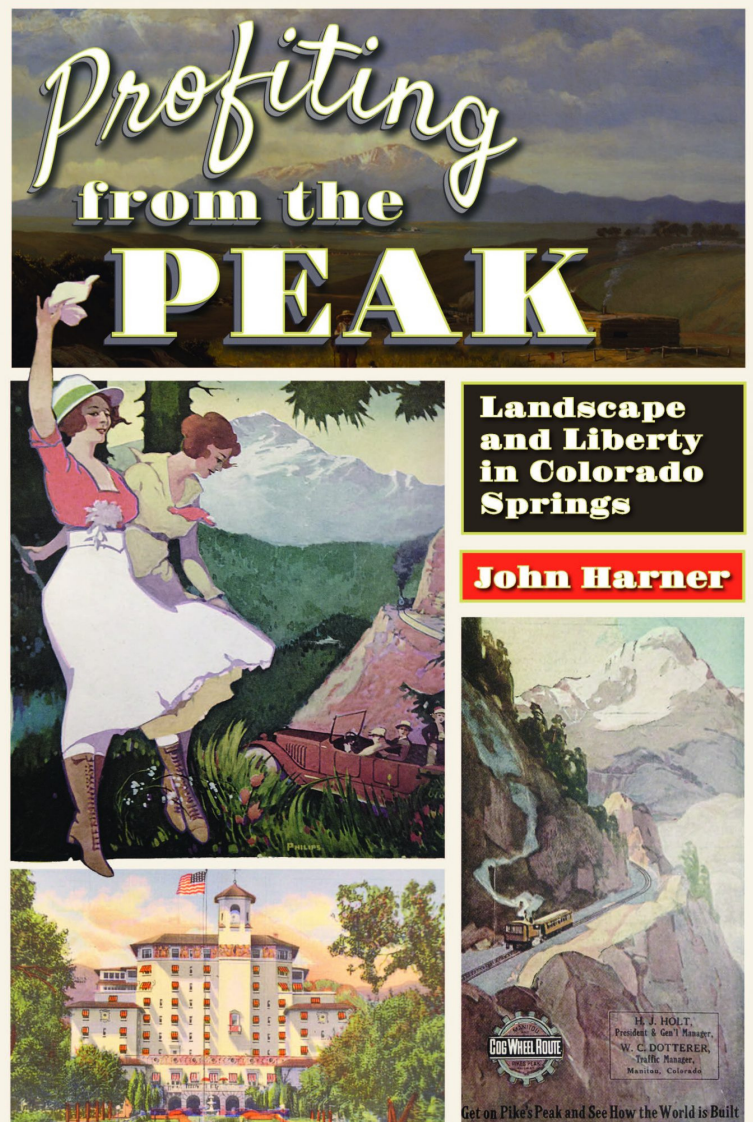


Celebrating Accomplishments in the CGSG Community!

John Harner, University of
Colorado Colorado Springs

John Harner was the recipient
of the AAG's 2021 J.B. Jackson
Award for his book *Profiting
from the Peak: Landscape and
Liberty in Colorado Springs*.

This award is for American
geographers who write books
about the United States which
convey the insights of
professional geography in
language that is interesting
and attractive to a lay
audience.



CGSG Keynote, Business Meeting, Elections, and Awards at AAG 2022

On Sunday, February 27th, we were truly honored to host our CGSG Keynote for AAG 2022 featuring Dr. Rashad Shabazz of Arizona State University with "Prince and Place: A Premier on the Geography of Music"!



CGSG Keynote, Business Meeting, Elections, and Awards at AAG 2022

Our business meeting for CGSG took place on Friday, February 27th, where we discussed our accomplishments for the year, announced our elections and awards results, and strategized our engagement activities for the upcoming year! You can [view the minutes from this meeting](#) and get in touch if there are any initiatives you would like to get involved in, or suggestions you would like to make to the Board!

We are delighted to announce our new Executive Board members for 2022-2023:

Graduate Student Representative (1 of 3): **Katrina Finkelstein**, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Graduate Student Representative (2 of 3): **Adam Regula**, Kent State University

Nominations Director: **Mark Rhodes**, Michigan Technological University

Program Director: **Josh Merced**, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

CGSG Keynote, Business Meeting, Elections, and Awards at AAG 2022

We were also honored to be able to offer awards to many members of our community engaging in exciting research and professional engagement!

American Association of Geographer's Cultural Geography Specialty Group

2022 PHOTO COMPETITION RESULTS

JUDGE'S CHOICE

Hardt Bergmann
(he/him/his)
Master of Applied Geography Student
New Mexico State University

DESERT DAMSCAPE

 @hardtstravels  @HardtBergmann





PEOPLE'S CHOICE

Jessica Villena Sanchez
(she/her/ella)
PhD Candidate
Department of Geography and the Environment
University of Denver

SELFIES AT THE TEMPLE

 @Jessica_Villena
 www.linkedin.com/in/jessica-villena

THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO PARTICIPATED!

See the top submissions in the upcoming issues of
MATERIAL CULTURE
THE JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR LANDSCAPE, PLACE, & MATERIAL CULTURE

CGSG Keynote, Business Meeting, Elections, and Awards at AAG 2022

Adjunct Award
Beth Nelson
Jacquelyn Johnston

Research Grants

Ingrid Diaz (Ph.D.)
Kaitlin Stewart (MA)



Just for Fun: Cultural Geography-Themed Game!

Feel free to print the following game for a fun mini-break, with a cultural geography flavor!

Cultural Geography Word Search

E K C Y B E P A P R R E U Q E
W C P P M Q H C H V P F O X C
X I A Y H L W L E X E J P K A
G B B P W P O O C F K E M S L
Y M E G S Y C T Q G R C Y P P
L H U O B D M H F I C J R H J
K A T S B I E I E V D Z S X R
L V C N I R J N F X G F D A U
O Z F I U C C G M A B A U C R
I O A T R E M J O F Q A L Q T
M B L K R O W D L E I F B N X
W U F O O D T J X X B U A X J
C W T R N J I S M E O N U V S
H G O M Z H P Y I J A R J X P
Q Z X I N W L X J H E F L Z S

Clothing

Fieldwork

Music

Culture

Food

Place

Experience

Historical

Space

Find the word in the puzzle.

Words can go in any direction.

Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

Stay in Touch with CGSG!

Follow us on Twitter at
@CulturalGeography,
<https://twitter.com/CulturalGeogSG>

Check out our new website at
<https://culturalgeographysg.org/>





Photo Attributions

Cover Photo: Josh Merced

Page 2 Header: Eric Krull, Unsplash

Page 3 Side Photo: Nahil Naseer, Unsplash

Page 5 Banner: Andreas Brücker, Unsplash

Page 11 Footer: Andreas Brücker, Unsplash

Page 14 Image: Dr. Jacquie Housel

Page 16 Footer: Bjorn Snelders, Unsplash

Page 17 Image: Dydia DeLyser

Page 18 Images: Jeremiah Osborne-Gowey

Page 19 Image: Lucien Darjeun Meadows

Page 20 Image: John Harner

Page 21 Image: Rashad Shabazz, Tyler
Sonnichsen

Page 23 Image: Josh Merced

Page 24 Image: Bjorn Snelders, Unsplash

Page 26 Footer: Trnava University, Unsplash

Back Cover Image: Vitaliy Grin, Unsplash