

Report on Activities 2012-2016 Commission on Gender and Geography

1. Membership

A. List of Steering Committee Members

The Steering Committee of 2012-2016 comprised 12 members, including the Chair and Treasurer, (as compared to 10 members for 2008-2012).

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B. The number of Commission/Task Force members in total and by country as of 31 December 2015.

To date, the Commission's listserv includes just over 699 subscribers, representing more than 51 countries. This is an increase of 26 members since end-2014 (when there were 673 members), and a gain of 26.2% since January 2012 (when there were 554 subscribers). New members have been gained through Business Meetings held at each IGU Congress and pre-conference held in the last few years.

As noted in previous reports, the specific national origins of about 15% of the Commission's subscribers cannot be identified since they use addresses such as Gmail, Hotmail and Yahoo. In terms of individual countries, the distribution remains much the same as in our 2014 report (when we did a detailed count of the numbers). The largest representations continue to be from the US (over 90), India (over 70), the UK over 60), Spain (over 40) and Canada (over 30), while moderate participation levels (around 20 members) are found in Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Japan. Lower but healthy levels (around 10 members) characterise membership in France, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Israel, South Africa, Argentina and Mexico. The level of participation from individual countries in Eastern Europe, East Asia (except Japan), South Asia (except India), Southeast Asia (other than Singapore), Africa (except South Africa) and the Caribbean, remain lowest (but it should be borne in mind that these are the regions in which subscribers are more likely to use Gmail, Hotmail and Yahoo addresses). Also, we gained a few participants from under-represented countries in Eastern Europe with the conferences in Krakow in 2014 and Moscow in 2015, as we did for members in Japan when the conference was held in Kyoto in 2013.

The international spread of regional representation on the Steering Committee is good: 5 members are from different parts of Western Europe (including the UK), 2 are from the US, and 1 each from Australia/New Zealand, Latin America, the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia.

Twice each year, list members receive a newsletter (issued in English, French, and Spanish) via the Gender and Geography Commission's listserv (igugender@list.arizona.edu) with reports of activities of members and a substantial multilingual bibliography. The newsletter is additionally sent to the US-based geogfem listserv (over 600 subscribers) and to the British gender and feminist geography listserv (grgrs@jiscmail.ac.uk).

C. URL of the Commission/Task Force website.

<http://igugender.socsci.uva.nl/>

2. Meetings

A. The meetings your Commission/Task Force organized during 2012-2016 with summary information on their locations, dates, and numbers of participants.

2012

- **Conference:** *Down to Earth: Identities, Bodies and Spatial Scales* (IGU Gender Commission Pre-conference)

Venue: University of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany

Date: 23-25 August 2012

No. of participants/presentations: 80+ participants; 40 presentations

- **Conference:** IGU Congress in Cologne
Venue: Cologne, Germany
Date: 25-30 August 2012
No. of participants/presentations: 5 sessions

2013

- **Conference:** *Gender, Power and Knowledge: Building Global Networks through Local Sensitivities* (IGU Gender Commission Pre-conference)
Venue: Nara Women's University, Nara, Japan
Dates: 1-4 August 2013
No. of participants/presentations: 40+ participants; 20 presentations
- **Conference:** IGU Regional Conference
Venue: Kyoto, Japan
Dates: 4-9 August 2013
No. of participants/participants: 9 sessions (including 2 sessions with the History of Geography Commission); 22 paper presentations

2014

- **Conference:** *The Gendering of New Realities: Unequal Challenges and Responsibilities* (IGU Gender Commission Pre-conference)
Venue: University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland
Dates: 16-17 August 2014
No. of participants/presentations: 30+ participants; 15 presentations
- **Conference:** *Latin American Seminar on Geography, Gender and Sexualities* (a conference endorsed by the IGU Gender Commission)
Venue: University of Rondônia (UNIR), Porto Velho, Rondônia, Brazil
Dates: 8-12 October 2014
No. of participants/presentations: 159 participants; 83 presentations
- **Conference:** *Reorienting Gender: Geographies of Resistance, Agency, Violence and Desire in Asia* (a conference endorsed by the IGU Gender Commission)
Venue: Department of Geography, University of Delhi, India
Dates: 19-21 November 2014
No. of participants/presentations: 100+ participants; 28 presentations (including 2 keynotes)
- **Conference:** IGU Regional Conference
Venue: Krakow, Poland
Dates: 18-22 November 2014
No. of participants/presentations: 13 sessions (including 3 joint sessions with the Commissions of Geography of Tourism, Leisure and Global Change; Political Geography; and Sustainability of Rural Systems)

2015

- **Conference:** *Gendered Rights to the City: Intersections of Identity and Power* (IGU Gender Commission Pre-Conference; in conjunction with AAG)
Venue: University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee, USA
Date: 19-20 April 2015

No. of participants/presentations: >130 participants; 63 presentations

- **Conference:** IGU Regional Conference
Venue: Moscow, Russia
Dates: 17-21 November 2015
No. of participants/presentations: 5 sessions (including 2 joint sessions with the Commissions of Political Geography; and Population Geography); 20 presentations

B. A brief summary of the themes addressed, numbers of sessions and papers presented at these meetings. Please highlight any new ideas and insights identified and their theoretical and practical implications if appropriate.

In various ways, at all of the meetings, participants addressed the theme of ‘Scaling Gender: From the Body to the Globe’ – the Gender Commission’s theme for the period 2012-16 – across a range of other embodied axes of difference including race/ethnicity, class, caste, educational levels, sexuality, nationality, and migrant status. A crucial aspect of this thrust has been to scale the challenges that geographers working in parts of the world where gender/feminist geography is not very visible; a second thrust has been to provide opportunities for collaboration and communication among geographers researching and teaching gender/feminist issues. The discussion below draws out how this theme was addressed in the meetings the Commission organized outside the main IGU Regional Conferences.

The theme of “Scaling Gender” was clearly evident in the Commission’s Pre-conference meeting in Hamburg on *Down to Earth: Identities, Bodies and Spatial Scales* in August 2012. Organised by Anke Strüver (University of Hamburg) with Sybille Bauriedl (University of Kassel), the conference focused on embodied identities and their materialities at various spatial scales, as well as on more general feminist concerns in urban and migration studies. One result of the discussion was that there still exist huge difficulties to transfer outcomes of feminist research and action internationally.

In 2013, at the meeting in Nara on *Gender, Power and Knowledge: Building Global Networks through Local Sensitivities*, organised by Yoko Yoshida (Nara Women’s University) and Keichi Kumagai (Ochanomizu University), the papers that were presented contextualized gender politics at various scales and highlighted the production of new spatialities in relation to local and global linkages while in the discussions, focus was also given to the building of cross-boundary research and the complexities of building qualitative international research.

2014 was a particularly active year for the Gender Commission in terms of meetings (beyond organising sessions in Krakow). In August 2014, we held Pre-conference Workshop on *The Gendering of New Realities: Unequal Challenges and Responsibilities, in Warsaw*. Organised by Bogumiła Lisocka-Jaegermann (University of Warsaw) and Mirosław Grochowski (University of Warsaw), the papers raised many questions and stimulated active discussion on a range of important issues around the theme of unequal gendered challenges and responsibilities.

At the October 2014 Latin American Seminar on *Geography, Gender and Sexualities*, held at Porto Velho, Brazil, organized by Joseli Maria Silva (State University of Ponta Grossa) with Maria das Graças Silva Nascimento Silva (University of Rondônia), the conference contributed to a useful discussion of the theoretical and methodological aspects along three key sub-themes: space, sexualities and intersectionalities; knowledge, body and intersectionalities; and genders in movement (space, race, age and class).

Also in 2014, Just a month later in November 2014, at the International Conference on *Reorienting Gender: Geographies of Resistance, Agency, Violence and Desire in Asia* in Delhi, participants deliberated on the everyday Geographies of gender and space in Asian contexts, drawing out the important point that women and other marginalized communities are not only victims, but do also

exercise agency. A particularly significant aspect of the conference was a “Workshop on Feminist Methodology and Emerging Research on Gender”, where senior scholars shared their knowledge and experiences of a range of feminist methodologies with junior and early career scholars.

In 2015, at the conference on *Gendered Rights to the City: Intersections of Identity and Power*, organized by the Department of Geography, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and co-sponsored by the Gender Commission, through the support of Holly Hapke, Ann Oberhauser and Jan Monk, presentations addressed the debates within and challenges facing academics and activists interested in the political project of the Right to the City. Not only were gendered aspects of safety/threat, racism and activism discussed, but intersectionalities with sexuality, migrant status, class, etc. and feminist methodologies and pedagogies to studying the city were also examined.

A key issue that emerged at many of the meetings, and particularly at the Milwaukee meeting, is the continued dominance of gender and feminist geography and geographers from the Anglosphere, and need to make more explicit effort to recognise (the production of) knowledges from other parts of the world. This was an issue that was highlighted by Shirlena Huang (Chair of the Commission) in her plenary address at the 2015 Moscow Regional Conference in recognition of the Gender Commission being awarded the IGU’s inaugural “Commission Excellence Award”.

Our Commission continues to be committed to finding ways to deconstruct the ways feminist (and other) geographies are rooted in Western-centric viewpoints, and overcome the challenges of international collaboration (including the need for sensitivity to power differences and for spaces of collaboration to be spaces of trust and flexibility to working differently and respectfully in different local settings). The ultimate goal has been to “scale difference” and facilitate communication among geographers by supporting activities outside the Anglo-American centre.

A significant practical outcome of the Commission’s efforts was the introduction of a new initiative to run regional workshops on “Feminist Methods for Constructing Geographical Knowledge” in countries of the Global South to contribute to the training of feminist geographers and consciousness-raising in these countries. The 2014 Delhi workshop on feminist methodology was a direct outcome of this initiative; the Commission provided USD1,000 to support the event as it not only provided an important space for junior scholars (many from South Asia) to learn from and interact with senior feminist scholars from all over the world but also increased the visibility of gender and feminist geography in a part of the world where geography is still a largely male-dominated discipline operating within a strong patriarchal institutional culture.

Another practical outcome after the Moscow Conference was a decision to set up a Young Scholars Committee that will allow young and early career geographers interested in gender/feminist themes to be more involved in advancing the agenda of the Commission and its activities.

The Commission also instituted a new process for the renewal of the Steering Committee, by inviting self-nominations from interested individuals. The selection of new members was then made by existing Steering Committee members based primarily on considerations of the (i) individual’s previous/ongoing contributions to the Commission; (ii) intended ways in which the individual would like to/could contribute to the Commission; and (iii) regional representation of members on the Steering Committee. This has worked very well for the renewal of the Steering Committee for 2016-2020 by flagging potential members that we might not otherwise have considered approaching (following the system that has been used traditionally).

C. The meetings or other events you plan to hold in 2016 or later years, including locations, dates, and themes if known. Highlight in particular your plans for participation in the Beijing International Geographical Congress.

2016

- **Conference:** International Conference on *Feminist Geographies and Intersectionality: Places, Identities and Knowledges*
Venue: Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain
Dates: 14-16 July 2016
Details: This is the Gender Commission's Pre-Congress event, prior to Beijing. It is being organized by Mireia Baylina.
- **Conference:** IGU 2016 Congress
Venue: Beijing, China
Dates: 21-25 August 2016
Details: The Gender Commission is planning 11 sessions in Beijing, with 3 of the sessions co-organised with the Commissions on Political Geography, Population Geography and Urban Geography. The proposed themes are: MART Babies - SMART Cities: From the Intimate Body to the Asian City; Mapping Changing Landscapes of Care in Asia: Towards Gendered Theoretical and Empirical Frameworks; Gendered Rights: Space, Culture and Society; Addressing Gendered Insecurities in the Urban Global South; Gendered Aspects of Migration and Multiculturalism; Island Bodies; Doing Feminism in Urban Geography: Interrogating Theory Praxis; Gender in Regeneration Projects: (Dis)Empowerment or Civil Engagement?; Dance, Bodies and Embodiment as Constructing Cultures, Economies and the Nation; A Woman's Place is in the City!; Conversations between Gender and Political Geographies: Key Concepts, Methods and Themes; Understanding Contemporary Dynamics of International Student Mobilities.

2017

- **Conference:** *Third Latin American Seminar on Geography, Gender and Sexualities*
Venue: Goiânia, Goiás, Brazil
Date: April/May 2017
- **Details:** The Gender Commission will be one of the sponsors for this conference that will be held at the Federal University in Goiânia. It is being co-organised by Joseli Maria Silva (with Alex Ratts).

2018

- **Conference:** *Gendered Geographies of Difference and Dialogue* (prior to the New Zealand Geographical Society / Institute of Australian Geographers combined conference). **Venue:** Auckland, New Zealand
Date: July 2018
Details: This will be co-sponsored by Gender Commission in conjunction with the Women and Geography Gender Research Network in Aotearoa, and is a Pre NZGS / IAG Conference event. It is being organized by Lynda Johnston.

3. Networking and communication

A. Ways your Commission/Task Force has collaborated with other IGU Commissions and Task Forces in the period 2012-2016.

August 2013: The Commission collaborated with the History of Geography Commission at the Kyoto Conference to offer two sessions (with a total of 8 papers) on the "History of Geography, Geographical Thought, and Gender".

August 2014: The Commission co-organised three sessions with the following IGU Commissions at the Krakow Regional Meeting. These were sessions on (i) "Gender and Tourism" (5 papers), with the Commission on Geography of Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change; (ii) "Gender, Human Rights and Citizenship" (4 papers), with the Political Geography Commission; and (iii) "Food Chains and the 3 S's

(Sovereignty, Safety and Sustainability)” (3 papers), with the Commission on Sustainability of Rural Systems.

August 2015: The Commission co-organised two sessions with the following IGU Commissions at the Moscow Regional Meeting. These were on “Gender Activisms in Asia: Peoples, Places and Politics” (5 papers) with the Political Geography Commission; and Geographies of International Student Mobility: The Roles of Gender, Class and Ethnicity” (4 papers and 1 poster) with the Population Geography Commission.

B. Collaboration with other international, intergovernmental, and inter- and multi-disciplinary if relevant.

2014: The IGU Gender and Geography Commission co-sponsored a feminist geography conference on Feminist Geography: Who we are, what we do, why we do it, organised at the University of Nebraska at Omaha in mid-May 2014. Other co-sponsors included *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, The Committee on the Status of Women in Geography, of the Association of American Geographers (AAG), the Geographic Perspectives on Women (GPOW) Specialty Group of the AAG, the Canadian Women and Geography Study Group of the Canadian Association of Geographers (CAG), the Women’s Network of the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers (APCG), Supporting Women in Geography (SWIG) at Pennsylvania State University, and The Great Lakes Feminist Geography Collective.

2015: The conference on *Gendered Rights to the City: Intersections of Identity and Power*, was co-sponsored by the IGU Gender and Geography Commission and the GPOW Specialty Group of the AAG.

In addition, various steering committee as well as ordinary members of the Commission regularly attend and organise conference sessions with other international and multi-disciplinary groups, including the main association conferences in the US and UK. For example, members presented research and organized joint paper sessions at the Association of American Geography, and at the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) conferences throughout the period 2012-2016.

C. Cooperative efforts with ISSC (International Social Science Council) and with ICSU (the International Council for Science) programs.

Robyn Longhurst, immediate past Chair of the Gender Commission, was a member of the Steering Committee of the International Year of Understanding (IYU) and to head the IYU continental secretariat for Oceania in 2012-13.

4. Publications

Newsletters, special journal issues, and books published or anticipated during the 2012-2016 period (provide complete citations for all publications).

The Gender Commission’s Newsletter:

- The Commission on Gender and Geography’s biennial newsletter was published in May/June and November of 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015.
- It is edited by Professor Janice Monk and sent to all members (currently almost 700) of the Commission. The biennial newsletter (issued in English, French and Spanish) forms an important worldwide communication medium. Each issue (averaging 6-10 pages) conveys information on past and future meetings of the Commission, meetings organised by national and regional groups of feminist geographers, institutional events and personal research activities, publications and achievements of Commission members.
- The newsletter’s reach extends beyond the Commission and the IGU’s usual communication channels, as it is also uploaded onto Geogfem and the British Women in Geography Study Group list, while part of the newsletters is translated in German and incorporated in GeoRundbrief, a

newsletter which links those interested in gender themes in geography in German-speaking countries.

Special Issues

- A special issue on “Bridging Gendered Diversity in a Globalizing World” was published in 2013 in *Hagar: Studies in Culture, Politics, and Identities*, 11 (1), guest edited by Orna Blumen, Tovi Fenster and Chen Misgav. This themed issue contains a selection of papers presented at an IGU Gender Commission’s meeting held in Jerusalem, on 8-10 July 2010.
- A special issue/section on “Transnational Families”, drawn from papers presented at the IGU Regional Conference in Krakow, is currently being considered by *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, to be guest edited by Claire Dwyer if accepted.

5. Archival Contributions

Materials and publications transmitted to the IGU archives to the IGU by your commission.

As noted above, all issues of the IGU Gender Commission’s newsletters, beginning with No. 1, November 1988, may be downloaded directly from the Commission’s web site.

6. Continuation

Assuming you and your colleagues in commission wish to continue your work, the final section of your report should include a **proposal** that specifically addresses:

A. The name of the Commission/Task Force, or new name if it is the view of your steering committee that it is to be changed.

No change.

B. A concise (100-200 words) statement of the mission of the Commission/Task Force.

The **overall mission** of the Gender and Geography Commission is to create a comfortable platform for people to exchange ideas concerning feminist and gender studies in geography; present and discuss new research on these issues; and create collaborations in research and other academic work among students and scholars working on these themes.

The Commission’s central **theme for 2016-2020** will be “**A Continuing Agenda for Gender: Respecting Difference, Fostering Dialogue**”. The theme highlights the continued push that geographers must make to create more space for pluralism, by strengthening comparative work between North and South/East and West, and by increasing collaborative efforts among geographers across international and sub-disciplinary boundaries, as well as generations. Over the next four years, the Commission plans to (a) continue organising conferences and supporting workshops to train feminist geographers and result in consciousness-raising of gender issues and feminist approaches especially in countries outside the “Anglo-American centre”; (b) develop a Young and Early Career group within the commission to mentor younger and emerging scholars interested in gender/feminist geography; and (c) foster dialogue on the intersection of gender with other identities that play a role in the experience of place, such as age, social class, ethnicity, sexuality, ability and others.

C. A list of the individuals who will comprise the steering committee from **2016-2020**. Provide complete contact information for all proposed steering committee members.

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The Steering Committee for 2016-2020 currently has one less member than in 2012-2016. We have deliberately left the final position unfilled to enable us to find a 12th member from an un(der)represented region (in terms of overall membership in the Commission).

D. A summary of the work plan for the Commission/Task Force for the 2016-2020 period.

The Gender Commission is proud that it was selected as the inaugural recipient of the IGU's "Commission Excellence Award" that was presented at the meeting in Krakow. As highlighted in the Commission's plenary address delivered at the meeting in Moscow, the Commission intends to ensure that gender will have a continuing, if not more significant, place on the research agenda, not only for gender/feminist geographers, but also for those working in other sub-disciplines in Geography.

There are 5 main facets in the Commission's workplan for 2016-2020 to achieve this:

- The Commission plans to have continued active participation in IGU conferences for the period, including the organisation of sessions, both as a Commission and jointly with other Commissions, in Beijing in August 2016 (as noted above, we have 11 sessions planned) and in Quebec, Canada in August 2018 (in terms of the latter, we are especially excited that there will be a member from Canada in the new Steering Committee for 2016-2020). Prior to the meeting in Beijing, we will be organising an International Conference on *Feminist Geographies and Intersectionality: Places, Identities and Knowledges* in Barcelona on 14-16 July 2016 at the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain. This conference will act as the Gender Commission's Pre-conference to Beijing.
- The Commission will continue running regional workshops on "Feminist Methods for Constructing Geographical Knowledge" in countries of the Global South to contribute to the training of feminist geographers and consciousness-raising in these countries.
- The Steering Committee will work with one of the Commission's young members, Dr Kamalini Ramdas (who has been selected to be on the IGU's Young and Early Career Geographers Task Force) to establish a Young and Early Career Geographers group within the Gender Commission. This initiative, tentatively called 'Kickstart Gender', is the Gender Commission's networking, sharing and mentoring platform. It aims to develop a community of early career feminist geographers who are able to support and learn from each other. Kickstart will also provide junior scholars with the opportunity to learn from founding feminist scholars in the commission (e.g. through the running Masterclasses during Commission-organised pre-conference meetings or at sessions at the main IGU conferences). A Young Geographers Group will also mean that there will be a younger generation of scholars who can be considered for the Steering Committee in future.
- The Commission also plans to continue with the publication of the biennial newsletter and a couple of special issues. The newsletter is currently published in English, French and Spanish and we will be looking into also publishing it in Chinese.
- We will also continue the website to stimulate communication. In particular, the Steering Committee will work with the Commission's Young and Early Career Geographers group to liven up the website (ideas currently in the pipeline include a networking forum and an archive of FAQs for early career feminist geographers).

We anticipate that, in combination, these 5 aspects will enable us to not only prompt discussions across international, disciplinary and generational boundaries, but also to bring new conceptual insights and empirical richness to, and have applied value for, the sub-discipline of gender/feminist geography, as befitting our theme of "A Continuing Agenda for Gender: Respecting Difference, Fostering Dialogue" for 2016-2020.