Letter from Commission Chair

It has been four years since I became Chair of the Commission and it has been an honour to have been able to serve the Gender Commission in this capacity. I write this message with a tinge of sadness as I end my term in August 2016, but mainly filled with satisfaction because it has been an extremely fulfilling four years.

I am grateful that I was always supported by a wonderful Steering Committee and also many other geographers from around the world who organised sessions at each annual IGU conference, pre-IGU conference meetings and also independent workshops. We met to discuss our Commission’s 2012-16 theme of “Scaling Gender: From the Body to the Globe” in Hamburg and Cologne (2012), Nara and Kyoto (2013), Warsaw, Krakow, Rondônia and Delhi (2014), as well as Milwaukee and Moscow (2015). I was honoured to present a plenary talk on “A Continuing Agenda for Gender” at the 2015 IGU Conference in Moscow, as part of the Commission being conferred the IGU’s inaugural “Commission Excellence Award” in 2014 in recognition of our activities and achievements for 2012 and 2013. Our listserve also grew steadily, from about 550 subscribers in 2012 to approximately 700 currently.

Among the exciting initiatives put in place during this period were: the organization and funding support to run regional workshops on “Feminist Methods for Constructing Geographical Knowledge” to train feminist geographers in countries of the Global South; the institution of a new process for the renewal of Steering Committee members by inviting self-nominations; and the establishment of a Young and Emerging Scholars (YES!) task force to establish a platform for the networking and mentoring of early career feminist geographers (read more about this in this Newsletter). The last is the most exciting as it will ensure continuity for the Commission!

As full as the last four years have been for the Commission, I am sure that the next four will be even more exciting. Our theme for 2016-2020 will be “A Continuing Agenda for Gender: Respecting Difference, Fostering Dialogue”, highlighting the continued push to create space for pluralism in the discipline. I am most delighted to announce that Lynda Johnston has agreed to take on the position of Gender Commission Chair for 2016-2020. I am fully confident that she will take the Commission to new heights. I would also like to warmly welcome Marianne Blidon (France), Linda Peake (Canada), Yvonne Underhill-Sern (New Zealand), Elena Vacchelli (UK) and Yoko Yoshida (Japan) to the Steering Committee.

I must also thank all the Steering Committee members who worked alongside me during my term as Chair: Orna Blumen (Israel), Anindita Datta (India), Lynda Johnston (New Zealand), Ann Oberhauser (USA), Joseli Maria Silva (Brazil), Anke Strüver (Germany) – all of whom will be continuing on the Committee – and especially Holly Hapke (USA), Mireia Baylina (Spain), Claire Dwyer (UK), Ragnhild Lund (Norway) and Marcella Schmidt di Friedberg (Italy) – all of whom will be completing their term,
alongside me, in August 2016. I am also extremely grateful to Janice Monk for the very important work of tirelessly compiling the Commission’s twice yearly Newsletter, and Joos Droogleever Fortuijn for her vital role in managing the Commission’s website.

I look forward to meeting many of you at one of the many sessions being (co-)organised by the Commission at the International Geographical Congress in Beijing (21-25 August 2016); some 70 abstracts have been submitted to our sessions! But before that, I hope to see you at the Gender Commission’s pre-IGC conference on “Feminist Geographies and Intersectionality: Places, Identities and Knowledges” in Barcelona (14-16 July 2016). I anticipate lively discussion of gender and feminist issues at both meetings.

Please refer to our website (http://igugender.socsciuvanl/) for fuller details of the activities and plans noted above (the Report on the Gender and Geography Commission’s Activities, 2012-2016, will soon be made available).

Shirlena Huang
National University of Singapore

Launching YES! in 2016:
Networking and Mentoring for Early Career Feminist Geographers

This year sees the launch of YES!, the IGU - Gender and Geography Commission’s task force for Young and Emerging Scholars. YES! mirrors the Youth Task force forming at the IGU level and will act as a networking, sharing and mentoring platform for early career feminist geographers. We plan to survey the Commission’s members to gauge key needs, however ideas currently in the pipeline include networking forums at the 2016 and 2017 IGU and pre-conferences, and a blog or resource page on the gender commission website that includes information on professional development, research, teaching, and well-being. We are particularly keen to promote new membership in the Commission from early career scholars and to foster transnational collaborative networks.

YES! is currently collectively organized by Kamalini Ramdas, Milena Janiec, and Caroline Faria. Kamalini is based in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. Her interests are located at the nexus of gender, sexuality and community politics. She is particularly focused on theorising the spatialities that emerge out of feminist care ethics and how these enable us to reimagine family, community and state-society relations more broadly. Milena is about to complete her PhD from the University of South Florida, and is examining the spatial component of intersectional identity and the impacts of migration on the changing sociocultural fabric of cities and farms in Japan. This forms part of a broader body of research examining gender, work, and migration in an East Asian context (including China, Japan, and South Korea). Lastly, Caroline is based in the Department of Geography and the Environment at the University of Texas at Austin. She works on the relationship between gender and nationalism in East Africa, with a focus on transnational South Sudanese feminist organizing, the emergent beauty trade in South Sudan, and most recently the globalization of this industry between the wider East African - Gulf region.

YES! plans to meet for the first time during the 2016 pre-conference in Barcelona and will hold a masterclass panel during the pre-conference meeting for the IGU in 2017. If you’re interested in participating and/or have your own ideas to share please contact Kamalini, Milena and Caroline at geokr@nus.edu.sg and we will add you to our growing mailing list. If you are a senior faculty and have
ideas of ways to support us, let us know. Please help us spread the news about YES! We look forward to working with you!

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

We are delighted to report that Maria Dolors Garcia-Ramon, Autonomous University of Barcelona will be awarded the Lauréat d’Honneur from the International Geographical Union (IGU) during the upcoming 33rd IGU Congress in Beijing (August 21-25, 2016). This award was established in 1976 in order to recognize individuals who have achieved particular distinction in the work of the IGU or in international geography and environmental research. She will be the fifth woman so honored. Among geographers who have received the highly prestigious award in the past are Peter Haggett, Paul Claval, Yi-Fu-Tuan, and Janice Monk. (see http://igu-online.org/about-us/roll-of-honour/). Maria Dolors has also been selected to receive the prestigious Vautrin-Lud Award for 2016. The award, known as “Nobel Prize of Geography”, will be conferred during the Festival International de Géographie in Saint-Dié-des-Vosges (France) from 30th September to 2nd October 2016: http://www.fig.saint-die-des-vosges.fr/

The collaboration between the Department of Geography, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi and the Department of Gender Studies, Lund University, Sweden under the Linnaeus Palme program, has now seen the first student exchanges. Indian students working on gender related themes traveled to Sweden and Swedish students came India to complete the course on Gender and Space with ref to India. Anindita Datta, coordinator on the Indian side, completed the teaching exchange at the Department of Gender Studies at Lund University. Dr Datta has also received funding from the University of Delhi for her project on mapping the history of geographies of gender and feminist geographies in India. The project is currently in its first phase tracing the history of women geographers who first entered the male dominated discipline.

Congratulations to Ann Oberhauser who has been appointed to the position of Director of Women and Gender Studies at Iowa State University. We wish her well in this new role and also appreciate that she has been selected as the Treasurer of the IGU Commission on Gender and Geography. Ann will be taking over from Holly Hapke whose work in that role for several years is greatly appreciated.

Janet Momsen is preparing the 3rd edition of her text Gender and Development (Routledge) for completion this summer.

The current edition of the German-language newsletter for feminist-gender geographies (Feministische Geo-Rundmail No. 67) focuses on the theme of gender perspectives on carceral geographies (Geographische Gefängnifsorschung aus Geschelecterperspective) and also includes an extended tribute to the late Doreen Massey who played a sustained role in supporting the development of feminist perspectives in German geography. The newsletter is circulated by Marina Richter (marina.richter@unifr.ch). The next issue will feature work on qualitative methods and feminist methods (in English or German). For information on submissions to that issue contact Jeannine Wintzer (Jeannine.wintzer@giub.ch) or Marina Richter.

Congratulations to Parvati Raghuram (Open University, UK) who is to receive the Murchison Award at the forthcoming annual conference of the Royal Geographical Society (with the IBG) for her sustained contributions research on migration and globalization particularly in relation to highly skilled fields such as IT, medicine and education. Her recent work has emphasized the numbers of women in the IT
industry drawing comparisons with the UK and India and looking at the impact of migration between the two countries.

With over 60 sessions sponsored or co-sponsored by the Geographic Perspectives on Women Speciality Group, gender and feminist geographic work was well represented at the 2016 meeting of the American Association of Geographers in San Francisco at the March 29-April 2. Among co-sponsoring groups of sessions were political and economic geography, sexuality and space, population geography, political geography, cultural geography, health geography and others. Particularly of interest and attended by an overflow audience was the session organized by Marianne Bildon (France) to share perspectives across national settings. Panelists included Mona Domosh (USA), Lynda Johnston (New Zealand), Marcella Schmidt di Friedberg (Italy) and Ebru Üstendag (Canada), together with Anindita Datta (India) who participated by Skype. They reflected on contexts and personal experiences to examine different challenges over time and place of identifying and practicing as a feminist geographer. While in some countries, naming as feminist geographer has lost its meaning. In others, it is not always audible. The Friday-evening annual off-site reception honoring authors of books in feminist geography was once again attended by an overflow crowd.

Sara Kindon (Victoria University of Wellington, NZ) has received three internationally-competitive research fellowships to support her leave (sabbatical) in 2016. During March, she was the Lillian Robinson Visiting Scholar hosted by the Simone de Beauvoir Institute, Concordia University, Montreal - Canada's first and longest-running feminist research centre. While there, Sara presented on her current research project (with Marcela Palomino Schalscha and Katia Guiloff) using arpilleras with Latin American women living in New Zealand. From April to June, Sara will be a University Visiting Research Fellow at Newcastle University, UK hosted by the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology. There she will contribute various seminars associated with her work in refugee resettlement and decolonising methodologies, and host a research sandpit with various invited colleagues from across the UK. Also in May, August and September, Sara will be the Inaugural Visiting Fellow with the Migration, Displacement and Belonging Research Group at the Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University, UK where she will develop a collaborative project using participatory and visual methods.

The Society of Woman Geographers held a Mid-West Regional Conference in Chicago on March 19, with presentations by members featuring their work in historical, political, environmental, and education issues, the latter addressing uses of GIS in a major university and also aspects of teaching students abroad "Service Learning: Volunteer Tourism or Do-Goodism." In April the Society selected six women doctoral candidates and three minority women masters students for fellowships to support their research. The fellowships, open to women students in geography and related fields in the US and Canada, are funded by a generous bequest from the late Evelyn Pruitt. Competition for the doctoral awards is keen, while interest from minority women master’s candidates is growing. For further information on the Society, established in 1925 is headquartered in Washington DC but with international membership, see the website iswg.org

Workshop Report: The Politics of Motherhood in the Neoliberal University

The University of Newcastle (Australia) (UoN) Mother Research Collective, with support from the UoN Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education, recently hosted a two-day interdisciplinary workshop addressing the politics of motherhood in the neoliberal university March 31-April 1, 2016. The workshop brought together diverse mother-subjects from both Australia and abroad to contribute to shattering the silence in which mother-academics and mother-students are presently situated. Among
invited speakers was geographer Danielle Drozdewski (University of New South Wales). Discussions highlighted that there is no singular mother-subject and that our gendered, raced, classed and sexualised experiences come into conflict with the highly individualised entrepreneurialism of the new academy in different ways.

The group is an interdisciplinary collective spanning student and faculty from junior to senior academics. It is investigating the inequities of motherhood and academia whilst we live and contest the everyday reality of being mother-students and mother-academics. It aims to create different conditions of academic and care labour by working together across difference and attempting to forge collectivity. Their first undertaking was auto-ethnographic and participatory research with mother-subjects at the University of Newcastle, focusing on questions of (in)equality at the intersections of motherhood and academia. To contact the UoN Mother Research Collective email: mothercollective@riseup.net

Bibliography on Ecologies of Social Difference

The University of British Columbia’s Ecologies of Social Difference Thematic Network (Social Justics@UBC Netowrk) has released an annotated bibliography on the intersections of inequality. Social difference and critical nature studies/political ecology/environmental justice. Search terms in compiling the bibliography included gender, feminism, race, class, caste, ethnicity, environment, political ecology and ecology. The bibliography can be found at www.esd.ubc.ca

NEW BOOKS


THEME ISSUE: The Canadian Geographer on “Cultivating an Ethic of Wellness in Geography”. With Linda Peake, Beverley Mullings, and Kate Parizeau . Contributions by Alison Mountz, Kate McLean et.al., Lawrence Berg et.al., David Conradson, Marcia England, Eric Windhorst and Alison Williams, and Laurence Simard-Gagnon.
RECENT BOOK CHAPTERS AND ARTICLES


Datta, Anindita. 2016. “Yeh Bhogol shastra nahi hai: on (in)visibilizing gendered geographies of resistance and agency in India,” Social and Cultural Geography DOI: 10.1080/14649365.2015.112943


Garcia-Ramon, Maria Dolors. 2016. “Geografía del Género y los espacios de encuentro colonial”, Debate Feminista Link: http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.df.2016.03.003 (on line)


Gilmartin, Mary and Bettina Migge. 2016. “Migrant mothers and the geographies of belonging.” Gender, Place and Culture 23(2) 147-61.


Hall, Sara Marie and Mark Jayne. 2016. “Make, mend and befriend: Geographies of austerity, crafting and friendship in contemporary cultures of dressmaking.” Gender, Place and Culture 23(2): 216-34.


Lopez, D.J. “American Red Cross posters and the cultural politics of motherhood in World War I. Gender, Place and Culture 23 (6): 761-85.


Petarly, Renate Rauta. 2016. ” Economia, solidar\'\i\a e feminista: apontamentos sobre a representa\'\c\ao social de trabalho dom\'estic\o peias mulheres de Arau\'uaina TO. Revista Latino-American de Geografia e G\'enero 7: 148-58.


Schurr, Carolin and Katherina Abdo. 2016. “Rethinking the place of emotions in the field through social laboratories.” Gender, Place and Culture 23(1): 120-33.


Sheehan, Rebecca and Jacqueline M. Vadjunec. 2016. “Roller derby’s publicness: Toward greater recognition of diverse genders and sexualities in the Bible Belt.” Gender, Place and Culture 23(4) 537-55.


http://revista.fct.unesp.br/index.php/pegada/article/view/3920/3205

Vullnetari, Julie and Russell King, 2016. “’Washing men’s feet’: Gender, care, and migration in Albania during and after communism.” Gender, Place and Culture 23(2): 198-215.


