



Editor: Kevin Ward
Co-Editor: Louise Bracken

Area Prize: The Wiley-Blackwell Publishers Area Prize for New Research in Geography

The 2009 winner of the Area Prize was announced at the RGS-IBG Annual General Meeting on 7 June 2010 held at the RGS-IBG headquarters in London.

2009 winner

Edmund Harris, University of Edinburgh/ Clark University

[Neoliberal subjectivities or a politics of the possible? Reading for difference in alternative food networks](#)

Area 41 55-63

The judges found this to be a theoretically sophisticated article. It takes on the 'it's all neo-liberalism' assumptions that characterises some of human geography and shows how alternative food networks, such as the 100 mile food movement, escape that kind of labelling. This is a well-written piece that is truly original, both empirically and theoretically.

Previous winners

2008

Emilie Lagacé, Oxford University Centre for the Environment

Science–policy guidelines as a benchmark: making the European Water Framework Directive

Area 40 421–434

A convincing mixture of argument and evidence, this paper tackles the important issue of how science is incorporated into public policy. This well-written article questions many assumptions held by physical scientists as well as those policy makers who claim to be adopting 'evidence-based' approaches to scientific advice.

2007

Jessica Graybill, Colgate University, Hamilton, USA

Continuity and change: (re)constructing environmental geographies in late Soviet and post-Soviet Russia

Area 39 6–19

This is an empirically rich, well-argued and thought-provoking paper that challenges all environmental geographers to think carefully about the roots of environmental knowledge and how that knowledge is transferred in different cultures. Based on a painstaking analysis of journal articles from the late Soviet and post-Soviet period, Graybill illustrates not only how Russian geographers (re)construct environmental knowledge but also the ways in which changing theorizations of society–nature interactions have shaped attitudes towards environmental and resource management over time. Above all else, Graybill provides a fascinating gateway into a

very different tradition of geographic inquiry in a study that should be required reading for anyone interested in 'non-western' conceptualizations of nature.

Dr David Nash, University of Brighton

2006

Christine McCulloch, Oxford University Centre for the Environment

Transparency: aid or obstacle to effective defence of vulnerable environments from reservoir construction? Dam decisions and democracy in North East England

Area 38 24–33

This is a provocative and well-informed paper that challenges some of the well-worn clichés of environmental consultation. Based on a series of case studies that detail how communities were engaged in dam construction decisions, McCulloch shows that success in opposing dams may be better achieved by behind-the-scenes bargaining rather than by public debate. The author reveals some uncomfortable facts about the current emphasis on participation and transparency. This is a paper that should be read by all those with an interest in environmental management and the modern political process.

Professor Alastair Bonnett, University of Newcastle

2005

Clare Herrick, University College, London

Cultures of GM: the discourses of risk and labelling of GMOs in the UK and EU

Area 37 286–294

This paper by Clare Herrick puts forward a clear and important argument. Her investigation into 'cultures of GM' and foodstuff labelling provides a balanced mix of the current theoretical material and her own empirical data. The paper has an original and urgent quality that illustrates why such issues are important to geographical enquiry.

Professor Alastair Bonnett, University of Newcastle

2004

Pauline Couper, The College of St Mark and St John, Plymouth

Space and time in river bank erosion research: a review

Area 36 387–403

Pauline Couper here provides us with a substantial review of research on river bank erosion, with a bibliography of over 100 items covering the diversity of scale, method, and purpose of this research - a diversity seen as a great strength. The paper is a novel synthesis, which adds value in using abstract concepts of space and time to show how these can help us understand this process, and guide further experimental research. The paper also critically evaluates theoretical means of bridging across scales (such as hierarchy theory, extrapolation methods, and modelling).

Professor Keith Richards, University of Cambridge

2003

Markus Hassler

Crisis, Coincidences and Strategic Market Behaviour: The Internationalization of Indonesian Clothing Brand Owners

Area 35 241–250

This paper by Markus Hassler encapsulates the essence of a good 'Area paper'. It is theoretically informed, placing analysis of the Indonesian clothing industry within the global commodity change framework. It utilises a sound methodology to provide original insight into the trading activities of Indonesian brand-owners. It is well structured and clearly presented and it does all of this within the word limit! This paper is proof that it is possible to produce a theoretically grounded, methodologically rigorous and informative empirical paper in 5,000 words.

Professor Mike Bradshaw, University of Leicester

2002

Richard C Powell

The Sirens' voices? Field practices and dialogue in geography

Area 34 261–272

There are few greater challenge in geography than the constant re-evaluation the role, approaches and outcomes of fieldwork - yet few of us in higher education take the time; Powell's paper is a painstaking analysis of current dilemmas that will hopefully find an audience beyond 'the community of philosophically minded earth scientists' (p.265)!

Malcolm Newson, Professor of Physical Geography, University of Newcastle

2001

Matt Bradshaw

Contracts and member checks in qualitative research in human geography: reason for caution

Area 33 202–211

Bradshaw's article marks a significant intervention in qualitative methodology. He explores the way contracts and member checks can be used by powerful groups to shape research processes and outcomes. Bradshaw's brilliant, crystal clear analysis makes it clear that researchers are facing new sets of methodological dilemmas and choices.

Professor Mike Bradshaw, University of Leicester

Purpose

Part of *Area's* mission is to be accessible to new researchers, including postgraduate students and academics at an early stage in their careers. The purpose of the *Area Prize* is to encourage submissions from new researchers and to reward excellent geographical research. The winner of the prize will receive a cash prize of £500.

Eligibility

To be eligible for consideration, at the time of submitting their paper, authors should be engaged in full or part-time postgraduate research, or be within three years of the completion of their PhD, or of equivalent professional standing. This time limit excludes any periods of formal career breaks taken for family care responsibilities, health or other personal reasons, or periods spent working outside academia (e.g. in a business or policy environment). Only the lead author of multi-authored papers will be considered; all single authored papers will be considered.

Application Procedure

At the time of the initial submission of their paper to the *Area* office, the author should indicate in their covering letter that he/she wishes to be considered for the *Area Prize*. The covering letter should explain the basis upon which the author is eligible. In the case of joint and coauthored papers with more senior researchers, the supervisor (in the case of current or recent postgraduate students), the principal investigator (in the case of Postdoctoral Research Staff) or the co-author (if written with a more established colleague) should also provide a covering letter explaining their input into the production of paper. Normally, the lead author of the paper should be the person who is eligible for the prize.

The assessment process

Papers are subject to the normal *Area* refereeing process and, if accepted, are published. By September/October of each calendar year the final list of all the papers published in that particular volume number (i.e. Vol. 42 for 2010) will be known. At that stage, all of the papers eligible for the *Area Prize* will be collated. The Editors Committee of the RGS-IBG will then decide which paper to award the prize to. The final decision will be made in relation to *Area's* mission to

publish the very best of geographical research and scholarship across the field of the subject.
The Editor's decision is final.

Award of the Prize

The winner of the *Area* Prize 2010 will be announced to the recipient in approximately April 2011, and officially at the AGM of the RGS-IBG in June 2011 together with the other RGS-IBG prizes.

Any questions concerning the *Area* Prize for New Research in Geography should be addressed to the Editor of *Area*, Kevin Ward, Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers), 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR email journals@rgs.org or kevin.ward@manchester.ac.uk tel +44 (0) 20 7591 3026 fax +44 (0) 20 7591 3001