

Middle States Division - Association of American Geographers

NEWSLETTER

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Editor: Steven Schnell



Summer 2007

Call for Papers and Posters

**Fall 2007 Meeting
The Inn at Reading
Reading, PA**

November 16-17, 2007

Abstracts due by August 15, 2007
(see inside for details)

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President's Message

The Reading Pagoda is an architectural curiosity that sits atop Mt. Penn overlooking Reading, Pennsylvania, the site of our fall meeting this year. It was originally built in 1908 by a local businessman, William Witman. Enchanted by a postcard of a pagoda from the Philippines brought to him by a friend returning from the Spanish-American war, he had a replica of the building in the postcard built as a resort hotel, even purchasing a centuries-old bell from a Buddhist temple in Japan. Witman's liquor license was denied, however, the hotel plans disappeared, and the pagoda and surrounding lands were sold to the city of Reading for one dollar.

When the Pagoda was first built, Reading was predominantly a Pennsylvania German city focused on heavy industry. Today, it is in the process of re-inventing itself – revitalizing old factory buildings for new uses and attempting to re-invigorate its waterfront. Recent immigration of Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Mexicans, and other Latinos has changed the composition of the city rather dramatically.

Since its construction, the Pagoda has served a number of purposes, most recently as an art gallery, gift shop, and tourist attraction. <www.readingpagoda.com> Curiously, however, it also has become a symbol of pride and identity for the city of Reading. A replica of a Philippino Buddhist structure, created a century ago in a formerly German-dominated community, has become a symbol of what is today an increasingly Latino city.

Clearly, the nice, neat categories that we tend to create for culture (and that populate our introductory textbooks) are flawed. Culture is flexible, fluid, and constantly re-invented, re-created from the scrap heap of history and tradition. What's more, as the processes of globalization proceed, jarring incongruities such as these will become increasingly more prevalent, as people attempt to create new identities for themselves and their places. It is, without a doubt, a tremendously interesting time to be a geographer! I look forward to seeing all of you in Reading this fall.

-- Steven Schnell, Kutztown University

Additional division information may be found on our website:
<http://departments.bloomu.edu/geo/msd/>

Fall 2006 Meeting Report – Rutgers University

The 2006 Annual Meeting was held in the Conference Center at Rutgers University. We had 14 sessions, 63 presentations, and 7 posters. On Friday evening, Tom Baerwald spoke about AAG Central's mission and accomplishments. The Saturday luncheon keynote speakers were Frank and Deborah Popper of Rutgers who talked about their work on the Buffalo Commons. We had a successful Geography Bowl competition on Friday evening, and a number of students qualified to compete in the national Geography Bowl championship where, as you'll see below, they did quite well indeed. Thanks to all participants, and to Sean DiGiovanna for organizing the meeting!

World Geography Bowl

Congratulations to the 2006 – 2007 Middle States Bowl Team for winning the World Geography Bowl in San Francisco this spring! Our winning team consisted of Jamison Conley from Penn State (who also won second place in the top individual scoring competition), Sam Smith from Penn State, Jennifer Lichty and Andrew Main from West Point, Karen Wertz from Kutztown, and Adam Steinberg from Rutgers.



The World Geography Bowl is intended to be a friendly, fast-paced academic competition among College and University students. The game challenges teams of students to answer questions based on a fundamental knowledge of Geography. Each year, the MSDAAG conducts a Geography Bowl at its annual regional meeting. The highest-scoring students will be invited to represent the Middle States Division at the World Geography Bowl Finals at the AAG annual meeting in Boston in Spring 2008. Whether you've put a whole team (six people) together, or are an individual wanting to participate, there's room for you at the Geography Bowl. Come and have fun with us! If you are interested in participating, or would like more information, contact Kathleen Schreiber, Millersville University, Kathleen.Schreiber@millersville.edu. The Bowl will take place Friday night, November 16th.

Middle States Geographer

Appearing soon, Volume 39 of the Middle States Geographer includes papers from external submissions and the Rutgers 2006 Meeting. This edition contains papers authored by both faculty and students (with peer review by at least two reviewers), and covers a wide range of topics.

This is a momentous issue, because it is the last issue that will appear in paper form. We have decided to go with entirely online publication beginning with the issue drawn from the Fall 2007 meeting (Volume 40), which will dramatically increase exposure and accessibility for articles published in the journal. In its current paper form, it is only accessible to a small number of people. With entirely online publication, however, articles will be readily available through web searches to anybody with web access. Also, because we're going electronic, graphics can be in color with no extra charge to manuscript authors. Manuscripts will still be collected at the Fall meeting.

We urge you to consider submitting papers presented at the Fall 2007 meeting for publication in the next issue. If you are interested in submitting a paper or serving as a reviewer, please contact the editors. Paper submission guidelines are provided on the journal's website (see address below). Available back issues can be purchased by sending a check for \$6 each (payable to Middle States AAG) to Kelly Frothingham, Department of Geography & Planning, Buffalo State College, Buffalo, NY 14222. The PDFs of the articles from Volumes 37 and 38, as well as Tables of Contents from Volumes 34-36 are available on the journal's website: <<http://geographyplanning.buffalostate.edu/middlestates.htm>>

Fall 2007 Meeting – The Inn at Reading, Reading, PA

The 2007 Annual Meeting will be held in Reading, Pennsylvania <<http://www.readingberkspa.com>> at the Inn at Reading on November 16-17, 2007. <<http://www.innatreading.com/>>. The conference will be hosted by the Geography Department at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania.

The city of Reading is located in the midst of the scenic Pennsylvania German country. Initially planned by two sons of William Penn, the city became a key industrial center in the nineteenth century, driven by, among other things, The Reading and Philadelphia Railroad (think Monopoly!). The railroad was established to bring coal from the anthracite region, and was, in its day, one of the wealthiest companies in the country. While visiting Reading, there is plenty to explore. The massive VF factory outlet, opened in an old textile mill, was America's first outlet mall and draws plentiful crowds. Nearby, West Reading is undergoing a revitalization as well, and its Main Street is lined with interesting shops and restaurants. The Goggle Works arts center, housed in a converted safety goggle factory, and provides interesting exhibits, an art cinema, an outsider art gallery, as well as a chance to meet artists working in their studios. The Reading Public Museum, home of collections in both science and art, is also nearby. In addition to its regular collections, the museum will be hosting a couple of special exhibitions around the time of the conference: "Degas and the Art of Japan," and an exhibit of pre-Columbian artifacts.

Our conference will consist of two days of papers, posters, and panel sessions. Friday night will include a buffet supper, cash bar, and the Geography Bowl. Top individual scorers from the Geography Bowl competition will be invited to represent the division in their defense of their national title next spring in Boston. Tom Baerwald, President of the AAG, will be our Keynote Speaker for the Saturday luncheon. We also have several other special sessions in the works, including possibly a "Healthy Departments" workshop, a session for standalone geographers (those who are the sole geographer at their institution), and a panel for undergraduates who are considering graduate school. I hope that we will attract a large attendance from faculty, professionals, and students from across the region. Please let me know (middlestatesmeeting@yahoo.com) if you have any questions, or would like any help in organizing a session or panel. I hope to see you all in Reading in November. If you would like to be on the program, please submit an abstract (not exceeding 250 words) by 15 August 2007. Please note whether your abstract is for a paper, a poster, or a discussion panel. Hard copies of abstracts are acceptable, but the preferred method would be to attach your abstract as a Word file and send to Steven Schnell at middlestatesmeeting@yahoo.com. To ensure your place on the program, please also fill out the accompanying registration form, enclose a check, and send it to Steven Schnell, Department of Geography, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown, PA 19530.

MAKE YOUR LODGING RESERVATIONS

The Inn At Reading; 1040 Park Road,
Wyomissing, PA 19610 (800) 383-9713

Be sure to mention the "Reading Conference Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers" group for the special meeting rates, \$89 a night. Reservations for the special rate must be made by **October 14, 2007**.

STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

STUDENTS are urged to come and present a paper. The reduced rate for enrolled students is \$50.00 before October 15. There will be a Student Paper Competition, with **CASH PRIZES for both graduate and undergraduate papers**. Student papers can be submitted to be considered for publication in the Middle States Geographer. Students who enter the competition and present at the meeting get free conference registration. Student status is defined as of May 1, 2007. Paper Competition Guidelines are available on the division website:

<http://departments.bloomu.edu/geo/msd/index.html>.

For the student paper competition, send abstracts to Steven Schnell at middlestatesmeeting@yahoo.com by August 15, and send electronic copies of completed papers to Lawrence McGlinn, MSDAAG Student Paper Competition Chair, by September 30 (mcglinnl@newpaltz.edu).



Mail this page to:
 Steven Schnell, Department of Geography, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown, PA 19530

**Association of American Geographers - Middle States Division
 2007 Meeting Pre-Registration Form (Complete a Separate Form for Each Person)
 November 16-17, The Inn At Reading, Reading, Pennsylvania**

Last Name	First Name	(____)____ Phone #	Email	
Address		City	State	Zip
Affiliation				

<u>REGISTRATION FEES</u>	<u>Before Oct. 15</u>	<u>After Oct. 15</u>	<u>Enclosed</u>
FULL REGISTRATION (Friday supper, Saturday Lunch, all sessions)	\$110.00	\$130.00	\$ _____
STUDENT REGISTRATION (Friday supper, Saturday Lunch, all sessions)	\$50.00	\$60.00	\$ _____
LIMITED REGISTRATION (Includes all sessions, no meals)	\$60.00	\$70.00	\$ _____
FRIDAY ONLY (Friday supper, all Friday sessions)	\$70.00	\$80.00	\$ _____
SATURDAY ONLY (Saturday Keynote Lunch, all Saturday sessions)	\$70.00	\$80.00	\$ _____
		TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$ _____

Make Checks Payable to MIDDLE STATES AAG. Send registration form, check, and abstract (via email, if planning to present a paper, poster, or discussion session) to:

Steven Schnell, Department of Geography, Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, Kutztown, PA 19530;
middlestatesmeeting@yahoo.com.

*** If you are a student and have submitted a paper to the Student Paper Competition, note "submitted paper to student competition" on your check.***

Call for Nominations for Secretary

Want to get involved in Middle States AAG? Now is your perfect opportunity! The Middle States Division of the Association of American Geographers is soliciting nominations for the position of Secretary for 2008. In early fall, the position will be voted on by the membership. The Secretary will then progress in subsequent years through the positions of Vice President and President.

The secretary is in charge of keeping the meeting minutes from board meetings; the Vice President is in charge of organizing the Geography Bowl at that year's regional meeting, and the President is in charge of organizing the annual meeting for that year.

Send all nominations, as well as a brief statement that you would like published by your name on the ballot, to Steven Schnell, President, Middle States Division of the AAG, middlestatesmeeting@yahoo.com. Deadline for nominations is September 1, 2007.