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Progressive Regionalism and Boundaries

Panel sponsored by GPEIG, October 27, 2005
ACSP Conference, Kansas City, Missouri
Preserving the Future ([conference web site](#))

Preface: Progressive Regionalism considers the intersection of local and global forces that express themselves at the regional level. By "progressive" we mean an historically-based yet forward-looking, critical standpoint shared by people and organizations dedicated to eradicating root causes of poverty, social injustice/inequity, and environmental degradation. Included is a search for alternate forms of governance.

Panelists

Laura Huntoon

Nonprofits versus Governmental Agencies when crossing Regional Boundaries

Steven Moore

City-Regions, Narrative, and Progress

(Progressive regionalism from an architectural and landscape design perspective)

Keith Pezzoli

Critical Regional Ecology

Elisabeth Hamin

Progressive regionalism from a rural perspective

Scott Campbell

Discussant:

Abstract

Over the past decade, interest in metropolitan/regional planning and the so-called new regionalism has been steadily rising. Some go so far as to characterize the heightened emphasis as an emerging movement (Wheeler 2002). Stefan Kipfer and Karen Wirsig examine the new regionalism from a critical perspective; they recently organized and published a review symposium titled, Progressive Regionalisms in North America. All five review essays published in the symposium concurred that "the latest version of the new regionalism is a useful entry point to discuss the political prospects for a progressive regionalism" (Kipfer and Wirsig 2004). But

what does progressive mean in this context? How does progressive regionalism with its emphasis on politics, new institutionalism and governance factor into the sustainable development challenge facing city-regions in the context of globalization? The Progressive Regionalism in Global Perspective panel will address these and other key questions.

The term progressive is used in an increasingly wide range of academic, grassroots, institutional, policy and planning contexts. In addition to works titled progressive regionalism, one can find studies calling for progressive globalization, progressive governance, and progressive communications, among many other foci (Giddens 2003; Jacobs et al. 2003; Schroder et al. 2002; Sites 2004). But the term progressive is problematic. In recent years it has been used as a substitute for "Liberal." It often connotes a left-of-center approach to revitalizing social democracy (Etzioni 2004; Fung et al. 2003; Giddens 2003). Yet, globalization complicates matters. Familiar political categories of left versus right, and liberal versus conservative have blurred in some key respects. Interlocking problems of poverty, injustice, growth machine politics, consumerism and environmental degradation defy easy solutions; and there is no singular progressive champion to save the day. "Workers of the world unite" is a nice slogan, and it bears merit, but it is an insufficient measure on its own. The same can be said of hopes pinned solely on free market dynamics, the mobilization of civil society, regulatory innovation, technological magic, the entrepreneurial discipline of globe-girdling corporations, or the ingenuity of the so-called creative class. We are compelled to search for new understandings that are more nuanced, networked, systems-oriented, holistic, ecological, interactive and relational.

The intent of the Progressive Regionalism and Boundaries panel is to bring together authors interested in unpacking the idea of progressive regionalism from both a theoretical and practical standpoint. Topics we hope to cover in the panel, from an explicit progressive and global perspective, include contributions of the new regionalism and new institutionalism. In addition to this, we hope to put the spotlight on new frontiers for progressive regionalism including, for instance, advances in the creation of regional information systems, sustainability science and technology, ethics and culture.

NOTE: Related to this panel, a roundtable concerning "Globalization and Progressive Imaginations" is also being proposed for the ACSP conference, to learn more visit the [PI website](#), and/or [blog](#).

Also Visit the Progressive Regionalism Blog, [click here](#)

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Links:

Planners Network

<http://www.plannersnetwork.org/pnetwork/www/>

Progressive Planning Magazine

<http://www.plannersnetwork.org/pnetwork/www/>

The Real Utopias Project

http://www.versobooks.com/series/real_utopias.shtml

Progressive Directory, Institute for Global Communications (IGC)

<http://www.igc.org/index.html>

List of "Most Popular Progressive Websites", Published 6/30/04 by CommonDreams.org

<http://www.commondreams.org/headlines04/0630-20.htm>

RADIO POWER NETWORK, Progressive Talk Radio **[ON AIR]**

News, Commentary, Liberal Talk Shows, Exploring Progressive Politics & Culture
http://www.radiopower.org/liberal_links.html

Activist Scholarship: Making Social Movement Theory Matter
<http://www-personal.si.umich.edu/~garrettk/SMSconference/>