Submitted by

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I Mission Statement

The mission of the Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group (IPSG) is:

To foster pure and applied geographic research and geographic education that involves the Indigenous peoples of the world, past and present.

To encourage approaches to research and teaching that empower Indigenous peoples, and to help build relationships of mutual trust between communities of Indigenous peoples and academic geographers.

To stimulate and enable direct participation of Indigenous peoples in geography.

II 2007-2008 Dues

As of September 2008, IPSG dues are $6 annually for AAG members, $1 for students, $1 for associate members, and no cost for members of the Developing Regions program.

Dues received by the IPSG from the AAG for 9/1/07 to 8/31/08 were $555.00. Our balance as of 8/31/08 was $1,327.58.

We have attached the financial history report which provides additional financial information.

III Board of Directors

Renee Louis, Co-Chair (2008-2010)
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Zoltan Grossman, Co-Chair (2008-2010)
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R.D.K. “Doug” Herman, Secretary (2007-2009) and Newsletter Editor
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Board Members:

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Rebecca Dobbs (2008-2010)
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Juli Hazlewood (2008-2010)
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IV Accomplishments

1. Activities Scheduled

The IPSG was more active than ever before in 2007-08. Prior to the Annual Meeting in Boston, we hosted a joint meeting of the IPSG, IGU Indigenous Peoples’ Knowledges and Rights Commission (IPKRC), and the CAG Native Canadians Specialty Group from April 12-14 in Plymouth, MA. Thirty-six participants came from across North America, Europe, Asia, and the Pacific. Our agenda included meetings with local Indigenous communities, a visit to the Plimoth Plantation, and breakout sessions on various topics of interest and concern to the participants. Casey Thornbrugh, a member of our board and Mashpee Wampanoag, assisted with planning of community events through family and personal contacts. Paula Peters, a tribal council member of the Mashpee band of the Wampanoag Nation, shared the history of the band’s struggle for recognition and their land claims process. Linda Coombes, director of the Wampanoag education program at Plimoth Plantation discussed the evolving relationship between the two cultures represented at the museum (Wampanoag and Pilgrim as they existed in the early 17th century) and led us on a tour of the facility. Our discussions included interest in publishing on various topics including a special edition discussing methodological concerns raised by forming research relationships with Indigenous communities.

Following our pre-conference meeting theme of “Indigenous Geographies of Struggle and Self-Determination,” we organized a symposium of the same name for the first two days of the Annual Meeting in Boston. Focused paper and panel sessions covered a range of topics such as reclaiming sovereignty and identity in the colonial present, the impacts of climate change on Indigenous communities, and the philosophies and politics of place. We were pleased to receive generous support from the AAG in publicizing our symposium through an article by Executive Director Doug Richardson in the AAG Newsletter and separate listings in the official conference program. At the meeting, we also distributed a packet listing all of our sponsored sessions in order to draw further attention to the symposium and additional Indigenous-themed sessions.

We were excited to host Dr. Daniel Wildcat, Director of Environmental Studies and American Indian Studies at Haskell Indian Nations University and author of Red Alert: Saving the Planet with Indigenous Knowledge, as our plenary speaker for the symposium. We also received financial assistance for Dr. Wildcat’s visit through the AAG enrichment fund.

The symposium sessions drew larger crowds than usually attend Indigenous-themed sessions at the annual meeting. Following up on a successful panel session from the previous year, the panel session “Geography Encounters the
Indigenous: Assessing Theory and Methodology in Human Geography” drew a large and diverse audience, who engaged in debate with the panel members.

In total, the IPSG sponsored or co-sponsored an impressive 26 paper and panel sessions at the meeting:

- Alternative Nationalisms: (Un)Doing National Spaces of Belonging (2)
- Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples I: Policy and Justice
- Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples II: Working with Animal Nations
- Climate Change and Indigenous Peoples III: Scientific, Historical and Indigenous Perspectives
- Diverse Economies 1: Nontimber forest products as lens for political ecology and diverse economies
- Geography of Sovereignty
- Geography encounters the Indigenous: Assessing theory and methodology in Human Geography
- Indigenous Geography and Education: Negotiating pedagogy in the classroom and the discipline
- Indigenous Methodologies: Collaborative Research Strategies
- Indigenous Methodologies: Collaborative Research Strategies Talking Circle
- Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas: Conservation Through Self-Determination
- Indigenizing Spaces: Deep-Spatial Perspectives on Place [IPSG Plenary with Daniel Wildcat]
- Indigenous Tourism I
- Indigenous Tourism II
- Informing GIScience with Indigenous Knowledge
- Local Knowledge Systems: Cultural, Historical and Political Ecology Perspectives I
- Local Knowledge Systems: Cultural, Historical and Political Ecology Perspectives II
- New Stories for Old Places I: Philosophy of Place for Indigenous Geographies
- New Stories for Old Places II: Politics of Place for Indigenous Geographies
- New Stories for Old Places III: Panel Discussion
- Nicolas Barbier documentaries on Indian-Non-Indian Conflicts, Discourses and Worldviews on the Nez Perce Reservation
- The Colonial Present I: Reclaiming Sovereignty and Identity
- The Colonial Present II: Geographical Imaginations
- The Colonial Present III: Changes in the Land
- The Colonial Present IV: Cultural and Material Property
- The Colonial Present V: Post-Coloniality and Indigenous Scholarship
Directly following the annual meeting, a few IPSG members and IPKRC members (IPSG officers Jay Johnson and Renee Louis also serve as Chair and Secretary of the IPKRC, respectively) attended the seventh session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York City, making some key connections and getting involved in the international Indigenous political arena.

Later in 2008, the officers and board of the IPSG submitted a response to the AAG’s “Strategic Directions for the Geographical Sciences in the Next Decade” initiative, encouraging the recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledge in geographic research.

Throughout the year, we continued to maintain our list-serve on which members and friends post conference announcements, job position announcements, news, articles and other items of interest in Indigenous geography, as well as discuss proposals for IPSG activities at the annual meetings and beyond. Our Secretary, Doug Herman, maintains the IPSG website (www.pacificworlds.com/ipsg/index.html) which contains information about the group and its mission, officers, and activities (such as the IPSG student paper competition). The website also provides references and links to Indigenous geography materials and resources.

Finally, we continue to make progress in the inclusion of Indigenous and junior scholars in our group’s membership and officers. To help promote and foster interest in the discipline of geography among Native students, our next Co-Chair, Zoltan Grossman, produced an informational brochure that introduces the discipline and describes what geography has to offer Native people. The brochure includes examples of careers in geography, geographic research projects, and Indigenous geography websites; it also includes quotes from Indigenous members of the IPSG reflecting on their views of geography. A few hundred color copies of the brochure have been printed and given to members to distribute; a .pdf version is also posted on our website for easy distribution.

2. Business Meeting at the Boston AAG Conference

Thirty-nine members and friends of the IPSG (~16%) attended the business meeting at the 2008 Annual Meeting in Boston. Again, this number was an increase from typical meeting attendance, boosted in part by the presence of our international guests who had participated in the pre-conference meeting in Plymouth, as well as the provision of a pizza dinner beforehand in order to promote more socializing among members. An attendance sheet was passed around, and the contact info and e-mail addresses of attendees were gathered and distributed via e-mail after the meeting.

After introductions, we discussed the success of and ideas generated from the pre-conference meeting in Plymouth, as well as the symposium sessions. Reports
from the Treasurer and Secretary were presented; Secretary Doug Herman encouraged participation in expanding the IPSG website to possibly include an annotated bibliography and links to course syllabi. A discussion was held about the format of our paper sessions and the possibility of limiting our sessions to four speakers (vs. five) in order to allow time for cultural introductions (e.g. pepeha).

Finally, the group discussed IPSG business such as the student paper competition and upcoming elections for IPSG positions, as well as ideas for sessions, plenary speakers, and events for the 2009 Annual Meeting in Las Vegas. Members present from the Rural Geography Specialty Group expressed their interest in possible co-sponsorship opportunities. The board was also charged with responding to the Strategic Directions committee of the AAG.

3. Student Paper Award

In honor of the 2008 joint meeting of the AAG, CAG and IGU Indigenous Peoples organizations, the Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group of the AAG (IPSG) and the Indigenous Peoples Knowledges and Rights Commission of the IGU (IPKRC) co-sponsored the International Indigenous Geographies Graduate Student Paper Award. Papers were evaluated on their overall contribution to new knowledge and understanding in the geographies of Indigenous peoples.

First place (US $200) was awarded to Charles (Chuck) Lippstreu of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln for his paper "Bolivia on New Terms: Evo Morales and Indigenous Socialism."

Second place (US $100) was awarded to Heather Dorries of the University of Toronto for her paper "De-colonizing Geography/Reclaiming Indigenous Space: Indigenous Contributions to Geographic Methods and Thought."

4. Newsletter information

We electronically distributed a newsletter in the fall of 2007 to our list-serve, updating members on happenings at the 2007 Annual Meeting in San Francisco (e.g. student paper competition winner, business meeting minutes, etc.), and promoting participation in the 2008 Annual Meeting in Boston and the Indigenous Geographies pre-conference. Although production of a newsletter has proved difficult to sustain in the past, we hope to continue to produce a newsletter at least annually.

5. 2009 Annual Meeting

The IPSG is excited to draw upon the momentum of 2008 in planning for the Las Vegas meeting in 2009. Continuing upon our tradition of hosting a higher-profile plenary speaker to attract an audience outside of IPSG members (and to further our efforts to increase diversity within geography), we have submitted an
enrichment fund application for Gregory Cajete, Director of Native American Studies at the University of New Mexico, and approached other specialty groups, such as the Rural Geography SG, about co-sponsorship.

Already, the IPSG is sponsoring or co-sponsoring at least fourteen sessions for the Las Vegas meeting (and will surely sponsor/co-sponsor others):

- Is Saying Sorry Enough? Confronting the Enduring Legacies of Settler-State Colonialisms’ Atrocities against Indigenous Populations
- The Impacts of Ruralness to Indigenous Peoples
- Native Lands, Climate Change and Environmental Issues
- Indigenous Peoples and Protected Areas: Conservation Through Self-Determination
- Spatial Strategies of Indigenous Resistance
- Lost in Translation: Collaborating with Community Partners
- Native Peoples and the Water Nations: Issues, Problems and Solutions
- The Changing Geographies of the Arctic Region
- Places Postcolonialism Forgot: New Examinations of Center and Periphery
- Postcolonial Geographies of Texts and Textuality
- Spatiality of Indigenous Sovereignty
- Designing Sustainable NTFP Management Systems
- Indigenous Tourism

6. **Future Plans and Directions**

The IPSG continues to discuss other ways in which we can reach our goals, especially in terms of stimulating and enabling direct participation of Indigenous peoples in the discipline of geography, and building relationships of mutual trust between Indigenous communities and academic geographers. Proposals have been made for fund-raising activities among community sources to support these goals (through Indigenous community participation at annual meetings, etc.), as well as for the creation of an on-line refereed journal for Indigenous geography.

This topic came up again in our breakout sessions at the pre-conference meeting in Plymouth; several discussions concerned the possibility of launching an Indigenous Geographies journal or incorporating Indigenous topics into existing geography journals.

We were very pleased with the success of our activities of 2007-08, and look forward to maintaining this momentum.
V  Membership and Participation

At present, our membership count is 239 members; 114 (48%) of these are non-student memberships and 125 (52%) are student memberships.

VI  Financial Report

The IPSG financial history report is attached.

VII  Suggestions for Council

1. Part of the mission of the IPSG is to help build relationships of mutual trust between communities of Indigenous peoples and academic geographers. However, it has historically been difficult for us to involve Indigenous community members in the annual meetings for example, primarily because of the cost of registration. We have been successful in applying for enrichment grants, but the bulk of that money then goes toward registration, leaving the IPSG to try to cover travel and lodging and all other expenses. We realize that community members get a break in terms of registering at the lower member rate, but we also would like to see either the possibility of increased award amounts to support community member participation or some other form of support to make their participation more feasible.
Association of American Geographers  
Specialty Groups Financial Report  
August 31, 2008  
Indigenous Peoples Specialty Group  

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