

**AAG Newsletter
of the
Association of American
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Bound for New Orleans: The AAG's 99th Annual Meeting

It's not too late to make your reservation for the 99th Annual Meeting of the AAG in New Orleans. This year's meeting, 5-8 March 2003, follows directly on the heels of Mardi Gras, thereby offering a great opportunity for geographers arriving a day or two early to experience this special New Orleans cultural tradition at the height of its splendor and extravagance.

Throughout this issue of the Newsletter you will find background on some of the many highlights of what promises to be one of the most memorable of AAG's many outstanding annual gatherings. This year's Presidential Plenary, organized by President Duane Nellis, brings together four outstanding geographers (and honorary geographers) from across the sectoral spectrum of the discipline: Susan Hanson of Clark University, Kam Lulla of NASA, Tom Wilbanks of Oak Ridge National Laboratory, and Jack Dangermond of ESRI. The session is entitled, "Crossing Boundaries: Building Partnerships in Geography," and will explore how we can promote greater interaction between academic geographers and those in business, industry, and government, and how through such linkages we can strengthen the presence of geography nationally.

Kicking off the meeting on the Wednesday following "Fat Tuesday," the culminating day of Mardi Gras' frenzy, will be Keynote Speaker Andrei Codrescu, NPR commentator and author of *Hail Babylon!* and *Road Scholar*. Andrei promises us he will be fully recovered from Mardi Gras' revelry in time for the opening session address.

This year, Past President Jan Monk will re-establish the tradition of presenting the

Past President's Address following the AAG Banquet, though with a new twist. This year, we will be opening the doors of the banquet ballroom to all attending at 8:30 pm, so that all attendees will have an opportunity to hear Jan's presentation, which is entitled, "Women, Gender, and the Histories of Geography." Following Jan's address, all who wish may stay and mingle at an informal reception honoring all past presidents of the AAG.

Brian Berry will present this year's Anderson Lecture on Applied Geography, speaking on "Confessions of an Applied Theoretician." Special guest Robert Burkhardt, the new director



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of the U.S. Army Topographic Engineering Center (TEC) will provide an overview of geographic research at the many U.S. Army R&D labs throughout the nation on Thursday afternoon.

Other featured events include an international reception on Thursday evening for our members and guests from around the world, hosted by Past President Jan Monk and several of our specialty groups. Don't miss this opportunity to meet old friends and establish new ties to geographers from abroad.

The cultural and physical diversity of New Orleans and the Mississippi Delta enables a particularly rich array of field trips to be offered at this year's Annual Meeting. The local support committee, headed by Craig Colten and Kent Mathewson of LSU, has done a terrific job of organizing a fascinating set of field trips for geographers in New Orleans. These range from trips on "Where the Blues Were Born" to "Wetlands" and "Ecological Hazards," and are fully described on the AAG website (www.aag.org). Several workshops,

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addressing topics from “Multimedia World Geography” to “Exploring Population, Health and Environmental Linkages,” offer opportunities to further professional development and gain new perspectives.

An outstanding program is taking shape, with over 2700 presentations. Attendance at the New Orleans Annual Meeting is expected to be high, based on our current registration and trends. However, there are still hotel rooms and reasonably priced airfares available. If you haven’t already done so, plan now to join us in the Big Easy for what promises to be the most exciting intellectual, cultural, and culinary event of the year for geography.

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