

# Geography and the Humanities Symposium

The Geography and the Humanities Symposium, co-sponsored and organized by the AAG and two partner institutions, brought together geographers, writers, artists, activists, architects, and a variety of humanities scholars from many disciplines in an exploration of recent trends in the increasing interactions between geography and the humanities.



The public was invited to attend the eclectic exhibition of artworks, maps, posters and other visual displays organized for the Symposium.

By all accounts the events, held over the weekend of June 22-24, 2007, at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville and nearby Monticello, Thomas Jefferson's historic estate, were a great success. The AAG is currently organizing a book exploring the subject with input from Symposium participants and a range of additional contributors, including notable authors such as Franco Moretti and Andrei Codrescu.

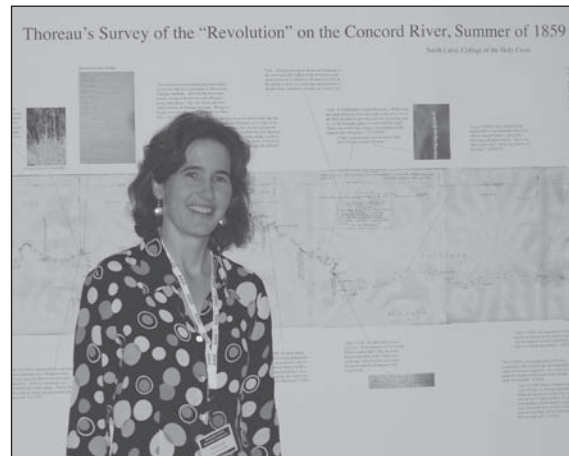
Over 70 participants presented their work or engaged in discussion at the Symposium, which included an eclectic exhibition of artworks, maps, posters, and other objects, held in the Grand Ballroom of the University of Virginia's Newcomb Hall. The Symposium brought together a mix of scholars, activists, artists and others working at the creative edges of geographical practice both within academia and without and spurred a weekend of lively discussion.

The Symposium opened with an address by Richmond University President and

noted historian Ed Ayers on Friday evening, continued with a plenary session, the exhibition of visual displays, a full schedule of 13 paper sessions, and an address by award-winning author Barry Lopez on Saturday, and concluded with a roundtable discussion at the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Library and a tour of Monticello on Sunday. Plenary speakers included Denis Cosgrove (UCLA), Peter Bol (Harvard University), Marie Cieri (Ohio State University), and Nick Entrikin (UCLA).

Feedback received from Symposium participants has been very encouraging. Caren Kaplan, professor of women and gender studies at the University of California, Davis, wrote, "Thank you for including me in the Geography and the Humanities Symposium. It was just great. I am so happy that I was able to attend. Everyone I talked with felt it was a great success. This is especially noteworthy since it was an ambitious project. Congratulations!"

Philip Govedere, a landscape painter and professor of art at the University of Washington, wrote, "I wanted to thank you personally for the opportunity to participate in the Humanities and Geography Symposium this past weekend. I found that the topics discussed had great relevance to the issues I am exploring in my own creative work, and I have come away from it with a lot to think about. As I said to director of the UW School of Art today, it was one of the most rewarding experiences that I have had as an academic. I was particularly impressed with the AAG's willingness to open the symposium



Sarah Luria of Holy Cross with her poster exploring Henry David Thoreau's intimate connections to landscape and place.

to such a broad spectrum of individuals and areas of inquiry. It was for me a remarkable and thought provoking experience."

The AAG developed the Geography and the Humanities Symposium in partnership with the School of Arts & Sciences at the University of Virginia and the American Council of Learned Societies over a period of almost three years in order to bring the Symposium to fruition. Additional support for the Symposium was provided by the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities.

The Symposium program is available at <http://www.aag.org/humanities/index.cfm> and may also be found in the June 2007 issue of the AAG Newsletter, pages 8-9. ■



Over 50 scholars, writers, and artists attended the Symposium's concluding roundtable discussion at the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Library.