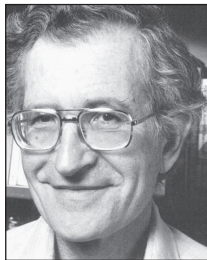


Noam Chomsky and Jeffrey Sachs to join AAG for Boston Meeting

Two of the world's leading public intellectuals – Noam Chomsky and Jeffrey Sachs – are scheduled to participate in the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting in Boston, to be held April 15-19, 2008. "In terms of the power, range, novelty and influence of his thought, Noam Chomsky is arguably the most important intellectual alive today," wrote Paul Robinson recently in the *New York Times Book Review*. Jeffrey Sachs has been cited in *The New York Times Magazine* as "probably the most important economist in the world." Sachs is the only academic to have been repeatedly ranked among the world's 100



Chomsky

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Sachs

most influential people by *Time* magazine.

Jeffrey Sachs, the director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, will deliver the Opening Session keynote address at the AAG meeting on Tuesday, April 15. Sachs, who is also professor of Sustainable Development and professor of Health Policy and Management at Columbia, is a widely known for his work as an economic advisor to governments in Latin America, Eastern Europe, the former Yugoslavia, the former Soviet Union, Asia, and Africa. He is also Special Advisor to United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. From 2002 to 2006,

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he also served as Special Advisor to United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan and Director of the UN Millennium Project. He has worked extensively with international agencies and private foundations on problems of poverty reduction, hunger, and disease control – especially HIV/AIDS – in the developing world.

Sachs is also President and Co-Founder of Millennium Promise Alliance, a nonprofit organization aimed at ending extreme global poverty. He is one of the leading voices for combining economic development with environmental sustainability, and as Director of the Earth Institute leads large-scale efforts to promote the mitigation of human-induced climate change.

Sachs' research interests include the links of health and development, economic geography, globalization, international financial markets, emerging markets, economic development and growth, global competitiveness, and macroeconomic policies in developing and developed countries. He is author or co-author of more than two hundred scholarly articles, and has written or edited many books, including New York Times bestseller *The End of Poverty* (Penguin, 2005).

Sachs is the recipient of many awards and honors, including membership in the Institute of Medicine, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is also the 2005 recipient of the Sargent Shriver Award for Equal Justice, and recipient of honorary degrees from around the world.

Prior to his arrival at Columbia University in July 2002, Sachs spent over twenty years at Harvard University, most recently as Galen L. Stone Professor of International Trade and Director of the Center for International Development. He received his BA, summa cum laude, from Harvard College in 1976, and his MA and PhD from Harvard University in 1978 and 1980, respectively. He joined the Harvard faculty as an Assistant Professor in 1980,

and was promoted to Associate Professor in 1982 and Full Professor in 1983.

Jeffrey Sachs' Opening Session Keynote Address will provide an apt beginning to a meeting during which the topics of Geography and Global Sustainability will be pervasive, necessary, and inescapable themes.

I am also delighted to announce that that **Noam Chomsky**, Institute Professor of

Linguistics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has agreed to join us at the AAG meeting in Boston for a special session which I have organized and will host, entitled "A Conversation with Noam Chomsky," scheduled for Friday afternoon, April 18, 2008. This special session will be a conversational interview, followed by an opportunity for audience participation

through a question and answer period.

As most geographers know, Chomsky has written and lectured widely on linguistics, philosophy, intellectual history, contemporary issues, international affairs, and U.S. foreign policy. A small sampling of his numerous publications include: *Syntactic Structures*, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, *Cartesian Linguistics*, *Language and Mind*, *For Reasons of State*, *Reflections on Language*, *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (with E.S. Herman), *Knowledge of Language*, *On Power and Ideology*, *Language and Problems of Knowledge*, *Necessary Illusions*, *Letters from Lexington*, *World Orders, Old and New*, *Powers and Prospects*, *The Common Good*, *Profit Over People*, *New Horizons in the Study of Language and Mind*, and *Understanding Power*.

Chomsky's work on the nature of human language and communication has profoundly transformed the field of linguistics, and greatly influenced science and philosophy more broadly. *New York Times Magazine* writer Daniel Yergin characterizes Chomsky's "formulation of 'transformational grammar' as one of the



Richardson

major achievements of the century. His work has been compared to the unraveling of the genetic code of the DNA molecule." Yergin notes that Chomsky's linguistics theories have influenced "everything from the way children are taught foreign languages to what it means when we say that we are human." The "Chomskyan Revolution," has also generated intellectual reverberations across many disciplines, including geography, anthropology, education, psychology, and genetics. Chomsky is one of the most frequently cited scholars of all time.

Noam Chomsky is also an impassioned critic of American foreign policy, and of

corporate and governmental power. His now classic book on the role of intellectuals in American society, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, greatly influenced the debate on the Vietnam War, and continues to prompt examination of the complicity of intellectuals in implementing policies of entrenched power to this day. Its arguments resonate strongly today in the context of a new war.

Chomsky studied linguistics, mathematics, and philosophy at the University of Pennsylvania and Harvard, and received his PhD from U-Penn for his original and ground-breaking dissertation entitled "Transformational Analysis." Since receiving

his PhD, he has taught at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in what is now the Department of Linguistics and Philosophy. He has received literally hundreds of prestigious scholarly awards, honors, prizes, fellowships, distinguished professorships, and honorary degrees. It is our great honor to have him join us at the AAG's annual meeting in Boston. I hope you will enjoy "A Conversation with Noam Chomsky." ■

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