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TGRG page

RGS-IBG Annual Conference, London 30th August to 1st September 2006

The success of last year's TGRG-sponsored sessions at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference was documented in a recent TGRG Page. Building on this success the Group is this year sponsoring sessions on two specific areas of the geography of mobility and accessibility. Other Research Groups are running sessions containing a transport theme, and general transport geography papers are also being presented.

The first of the TGRG's sessions is entitled *Gendered Mobilities*. It is clear that individuals' life experiences are deeply affected by the levels of mobility and accessibility they enjoy. Research demonstrates that these opportunities are very unevenly distributed, with access to car ownership and to public transport services varying significantly between socio-economic groups. The issue of how gender impacts on people's transport experiences—and, as a result, their access to services, the labour market and other life chances—is gaining increasing prominence. Although past research has tended to focus on specific issues such as gender differentials in access to the private car, contemporary research reveals the much broader importance of these distinctions; from the physical design of public transport vehicles to the design and marketing of cars and transport services. This session is designed to bring together researchers from this variety of disciplinary traditions and viewpoints and in so doing highlight the centrality of gender to transport geography research.

The second session is focused on the notion of *Gateway Cities*. Urban areas/agglomerations are complex webs of transport routes, nodes and services. Within such complex networks, major gateways play an increasingly important role in defining the overall structure of the urban transport fabric, the journey choices people make and the images they retain of the places in which their journeys occur. In recent years, the importance of gateways has been emphasised in urban development strategies, with major airports, ports and railway stations becoming the centre of attention in numerous masterplans for economic regeneration. Major new urban quarters around the world are being developed around these critical nodes, which themselves reorientate the wider city structure at the metropolitan scale. The award of the 2012 Olympic Games to London, and the associated regeneration of the east of the city which is built upon massive investment in physical transport infrastructure, has brought renewed focus on the importance of gateways as spaces and places in their own right, but also as a 'shop window' for the cities and regions they serve. This session will bring together transport researchers to discuss how transport interacts with the urban fabric, and to explore how gateways help create and are created by their host cities.

A related field visit is being organised by the Group to examine *Infrastructure for Regeneration*. The trip will focus on the large scale investment in transport and related infrastructure currently being pursued in East London. With the additional impetus given by the hosting of the 2012 Olympics in this part of London, a number of significant investments, including the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, Stratford International Station and new extensions to the Docklands Light Railway are forging ahead. The field visit will examine these and other projects, with specific focus on how these investments are integrated into the new urban fabric of this fast changing community.

We look forward to seeing you in London in the summer!

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