

Paul F. Starrs, Candidate for President

Professor of Geography
University of Nevada, Reno

(Previous VP statement)

Thanks to those of you who suggested I consider running for the role of APCG Vice-President: if it happens, I'll be glad, if no it's still a great privilege. While I'll confess to running hot and cold on going to AAG meetings, where 9,000 people disperse among multiple venues and dozens of simultaneous sessions, APCG gatherings invariably feel like home and the talks are usually way more gripping, as prospective scholars rehearse their skills and old-timers (me, now) reprise evolving projects, showing how work-in-progress becomes professional papers and journal manuscripts and ably illustrated articles — a sequence I've tried to teach at every level throughout my career, from student to reviewer to mentor of junior colleagues to journal editor to academic veteran.

Those of us who are teachers might agree that our job is less passing along “facts” than the revelation of insider skills, though from my students I invariably learn a lot of “how to” and technological wizardry in matters of presentation quality. With dozens of APCG talks completed by graduate students I've worked with across the years, it's a delight to see how fellowship, peer-mentoring, technical advice, and suggestions in apps-used and theories-brought-to-bear come together in our meetings. Yet the APCG is far more than regular gatherings and funding for deserving students, it provides program reviewers, regional expertise, newsletters and journals, travel companions and fieldwork support, and a sounding board for triumphs and occasional torments. Most of all, we are about ideas and inspiration. While none of that comes from me alone, I've taken on all of these roles, and recognition of that would be welcome.

And I will admit, too, nostalgia matters. My earliest official organizational membership was in the APCG, and at the 1985 Los Angeles meeting I gave my first professional talk. I remember Susan Hardwick offering congratulations with the warm words so characteristic of her, and close by loomed Kit Salter — then at UCLA — in full swing. With a minimum of shame, a pod of us grad students escaped from quite the peculiar banquet scene into a UCLA sculpture garden, toting a bottle of wine conveniently rescued from one of the non-consuming tables. For those who rely on numbers, I've given talks at fourteen of our meetings since then, and attended a number more: being there is always a pleasure, as regional meetings should be.

But professional organizations are about way more than annual meetings. For me, the APCG is the venue where students can be invited to join and watch and learn and step out on their own, and get advice for refinement and improvement — or showcase a virtuoso set of skills. Young colleagues can present preliminary data or hard-won conclusions; that happens and is great. The prospect of a meeting, with the run-up and rehearsals and the participation (and the availability of the Yearbook and Pacifica as publication venues) moves everyone onto a serious footing: from undergrads (even high-school students) to golden oldies, there's much to be said and shown and shared.

In the larger world of academia, running for office typically fits into the category of “service,” but the service involved goes well beyond the usual committees and meetings and obligations. In a recent on-line survey I filled out as a lark, I was rated as preternaturally high on “friendliness,” but ironically if maybe predictably, weak in dutifulness, since I'd recently stepped down from an intense three-year term as department chair. There are stories that make this contrast totally believable, but if elected, I promise to attend to all duties with earnest fortitude and graceful humor.

For the APCG and AAG, for our profession, and for cultural-historical-regional geography, which I regard as my main interest, I've tried to be present and useful. I've done multiple stints as an outside program reviewer (you know where and who you are); edited the *Geographical Review* for six years (the first editor ever outside of Manhattan); I am a founding, and still a consulting, editor for the AAG Review of Books, with responsibility for identifying volumes by nongeographers, finding inspiring and review-worthy books in foreign languages, and assembling review-essays of multiple books in one review — a particular pleasure. Let me know what you'd like to review. I've helped edit into shape doctoral dissertations by five of my own advisees, and done the same for theses by twenty-five masters students (with thesis topics ranging from artisanal organic ice cream to gravel pits to Moab outdoor recreation to Mexican arrastras). To date, I've evaluated fifty-one book manuscripts for university presses (and another handful for trade books), most of which went from manuscript into print. Of my own writing, there are five books, more in the works, and over a hundred chapters, articles, and reviews on substantially varied themes (you can look them up). Some of you have written nice reviews of the books, including *A Field Guide to California Agriculture*, which earned the J.B. Jackson Prize of the AAG as the best book by a geographer in 2009. I am on multiple nonprofit Boards, including the Black Rock Institute, a 501(c)(3) that I co-created which publishes books, sponsors lectures, and currently holds all the rights to *Landscape*, the justly-famed magazine published by J.B. Jackson and, later, Blair Boyd, which we hope to fully-digitize into PDF form, with a best-of anthology in the works. A proud possession, needing only some extra time and funding to become a reality.

For the APCG, I've been part of a small cadre of members pressing for greater diversity, creating opportunity, and bringing in potential new members who might not before have known about geography as a field. I owe so much in that regard to Dan Arreola, Kate Berry, Larry Ford, Dennis Dingemans, Susan Hardwick, and others, including many of my teachers in Berkeley and, earlier, LaJolla (well, UCSD). I came to academic geography lamentably late; in my high school, which was a good one, the only geography course was taught by the basketball coach (Coach Glenn) because, so convention had it, that was the sole course he was capable of teaching — by which I mean to say nothing bad about coaches, or basketball, or high school, but that does suggest where high school geography in the 1970s stood in terms of prestiges.

Geography has come a long way and thank goodness for all that, and as a field of study, it can improve and broaden its reach still more.

So, enough "I." Few of us were around when Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young released "Teach Your Children," and in the APCG now hardly any of us qualify as "children." But teaching well is important, and unlike the AAG and many other organizations that are about providing a front-and-center venue for professional grandstanding, the APCG really is, to my mind, about teaching and providing opportunities and inviting new faces into a limited yet devoted crowd. Making sure that we are as varied as possible is crucial: as Patricia Limerick notes in the *Legacy of Conquest*, the West beyond the Rocky Mountains is hugely varied. Geographers should be better prepared than almost any group to showcase that. I've given talks far and wide, and tried to leave behind an enduring interest and enthusiasm for what geographers do: our emphasis is on the applied and practical and field-oriented.

Working, as I write this, in a garret office just outside the ancient blond-stone walls of a Roman-Moorish town in western Spain, whence came many of the conquistadors, and speaking Spanish for 6–8 hours a day, I live and salute diversity. I cannot promise huge changes to the APCG, and I'm not sure I'd want them. If you move me along as a VP, I won't bore you, and I will try to make us more welcoming and better-still. Beyond the APCG being the most active of AAG regional groups, our newsletters and ideas

and meetings and interactions are invariably interesting and frequently fun. Thanks for thinking of me, and let me know what I can do for you.

Brian Pompeii, Candidate for Vice President

Lecturer, Social Sciences Department, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

PhD, Geography, 2014, Arizona State University

MA, Geography, 2010, Arizona State University

BS, Geography, 2007, The Pennsylvania State University

I am honored to be considered for the position of Vice President of the APCG. I received my PhD from Arizona State University in 2014 and have been an active member of the APCG since 2007. I am currently a lecturer at Cal Poly - San Luis Obispo. I am a human-environmental geographer with research interests in water access, social vulnerability, hazards, and sustainability. My current research agenda focuses on social vulnerability and drought in the San Joaquin Valley of California, advancing sustainability curriculum in higher education, and improving water access in rural southern Malawi. In Tulare County, CA my primary research project investigates how the Great California Drought was disproportionately burdened by the most disadvantaged communities. As a member of the sustainability committee of the Academic Senate and a facilitator of the Advancing Sustainability Curriculum Learning Community at Cal Poly I am leading an interdisciplinary group of faculty to collect qualitative data from students and faculty to identify and address barriers in sustainability education across the curriculum. As faculty advisor for Engineers Without Borders (EWB) Cal Poly, I am currently using mental maps collected from the field and GIS data in collaboration with a group of student engineers on the placement of new boreholes in rural southern Malawi to increase local water security. Due in part to these research and service activities, I was elected co-director of the Hazards, Risks, and Disasters Specialty Group of the American Association of Geographers at the 2017 meeting in Boston. I would be honored to extend my service in the field of geography to the APCG.

As an early-career geographer I have dedicated two years of service to the APCG: one year as a judge in the student awards competition, and last year in Portland I served as the awards committee chair. My plan as Vice President is to continue building on the agendas of prior leadership platforms, including revamping the structure of the student awards committee, creating targeted recruitment strategies for universities in our region who do not regularly participate in the conference, and developing strategies to increase the diversity of APCG membership. I, however, view each of these agenda items as issues that can be addressed in concert. In discussions with past APCG Presidents I am aware that targeted email campaigns have been conducted in the past, but that such an endeavor is overdue. Using the *Pacifica's* Fall 2016 President's column as a roadmap, I would work to target departments in our region that are underrepresented. Personalized emails would highlight our available student travel funding awards, women's network grants, and our already available scholarships for Latinx, Indigenous, and African descent students. A possible cascading impact of this campaign is that an increase in membership could help support more aforementioned awards and student travel funding. This membership encouragement campaign would also focus on early-career faculty members who may be new to the region and who also may be working to encourage research projects of their new student mentees. As an early-career geographer myself, I think I would be an excellent fit to conduct such a campaign from Arizona to Hawaii to Alaska and everywhere in-between. As a happy resident of San Luis Obispo, CA I would also be willing to serve as organizer for another meeting to be held on the beautiful campus of Cal Poly – San Luis Obispo. As a ten year participant and advocate for the APCG I believe I would be an energetic addition to the leadership community.

Yolonda Youngs, Candidate for Secretary

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Idaho State University

Ph.D., Geography, 2009, Arizona State University

M.S., 2004, Earth Sciences (Geography), Montana State University

B.A., 1993, Anthropology, Florida State University

My first encounter with the APCG was in 2003 when I attended the annual conference in Portland, Oregon as a graduate student at Montana State University. The trip was well timed. I had recently returned to academia after nearly a decade roaming the mountains and rivers of Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, Arizona and points in between as a commercial whitewater river guide. Those years gave me an informal education in the American West that formed a basis for my subsequent studies in Geography. At that 2003 APCG meeting, I presented part of my thesis research about Yellowstone National Park, attended my first Women's Network lunch, and met people that have since become dear friends and colleagues. The trip was made possible through a Women's Network travel grant and an APCG student travel grant. I will be forever grateful for that key funding. It opened a door to the collegiality, good humor, and fine scholarship of the APCG community.

I am currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of History at Idaho State University. I joined the department in 2012 after three years as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Oklahoma State University. Although there is no Geography department at ISU, I teach a range classes and advise students in ways that support the growth of the discipline. I'm happy to be back in APCG territory! My research interests include environmental historical geography, cultural landscapes, tourism, outdoor recreation, national parks and protected areas, and GIS. I earned an M.S. in Earth Sciences at Montana State University in 2004 under the steady encouragement and patient direction of William Wyckoff. My thesis focused on Yellowstone Lake's cultural landscape evolution from the 1850s to 1966. I moved onto warmer climates in the southwest where I earned a Ph.D. in Geography from Arizona State University in 2009 through the thoughtful guidance of Daniel Arreola. My current book project, *Framing Nature*, is based on my dissertation research that traces one hundred years of popular iconography, cultural landscape change, and environmental history at Grand Canyon National Park. I have published in the *Geographical Review*, *Environmental History*, and *Society and Natural Resources*. I recently published a book chapter on tourism in *North American Odyssey: Historical Geographies for the Twenty-First Century* and am anticipating a forthcoming book chapter in *Designs Upon Nature: The Cultural Landscape of Yellowstone National*.

My research has been funded through grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, National Science Foundation, Idaho Humanities Council, and the Association of American Geographers Historical Geography Specialty Group. In 2012, I presented the keynote lecture at Missouri State University's Geography Awareness Week. My teaching includes a range of courses such as World Regional Geography, Cultural Geography, Historical Geography of National Parks, Conservation of Natural Resources, Geography of Outdoor Recreation, Summer Field Seminar in National Parks, History in the Digital Age, GIS, and U.S. Environmental History. I have received awards from the Association of Pacific Coast Geographers (Larry Ford Fieldwork Scholarship in Cultural Geography), the International Geographical Union, the U.S. National Committee to the International Cartographic Association, and the NSF IGERT (Integrative Graduate Education and Teaching) program. I have organized sessions and presented numerous papers and posters at APCG, AAG, and other national and international conferences. I am a manuscripts reviewer for the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, the *Journal of Cultural Geography*, *Historical Geography*, Oxford University Press, and Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

The APCG holds a special place in my heart and professional life. It has been a vital part of my growth as a scholar over the years. I look forward to giving back to the organization and helping it grow. I have been a member of APCG since 2003 (minus a few years while in Oklahoma). I have regularly presented papers and posters and organized paper sessions at the annual conference. In 2005, I organized and led an APCG fieldtrip on the Salt River in Phoenix. I appreciate the opportunity to run for APCG Secretary. If elected, I look forward to increasing membership of students and other early career faculty, contributing to the Women's Network, and fostering more digital and social media outlets for APCG.