

**Kris Bezdecny, Candidate for President** (Reprint of 2020 VP Statement)

Assistant Professor of Geography, Department of Geosciences & Environment, Cal State Los Angeles

PhD, Geography and Environmental Science & Policy, University of South Florida

MA, Geography, University of South Florida

BA, History, Metropolitan State College of Denver

BS, Mathematics, Metropolitan State College of Denver

Thank you so much for nominating me for Vice President of the APCG! I received my PhD from University of South Florida in 2011. I began working as an assistant professor at Cal State LA in Fall 2015, and have been an active member of APCG since 2016.

My research focuses on uneven geographical development in urban spaces – or, how we reinforce sociospatial inequities in city-spaces at the neighborhood, local, regional, state, national, and global scales. My work is a hybridization of political economy/ecology and sociopolitical/sociocultural analysis. My first research thread right now is on the policy behind the 2015 California Drought, and how it disproportionately impacted urban spaces and the narratives of individually “doing our part” – and the disconnect with the *actual* water load on the ground before and during the Drought. My second primary thread focuses on the evolution of the relationship between urban globalization and urban theming taking place in the guise of branded communities, with a focus on the case study of Celebration, Florida. This is something we also see in less extreme forms as we watch gentrification and “hipsterization” in communities tie into global branding as part of changing the neighborhood landscape.

In the classroom, I facilitate the senior thesis research of all geography students at Cal State LA, which includes research projects in environmental geography, urban geography, and GIS – mostly focused on issues of environmental justice, social justice, transportation access, and community development. I also actively supervise several master’s thesis students each year.

I try to provide additional support to geography through our institutions for the discipline. For the past two years, I have been a Board Member of the Qualitative Research Specialty Group of the AAG; for the past three years I was Treasurer of the Los Angeles Geographical Society, and this year I was named President of the Los Angeles Geographical Society. In my time attending APCG meetings I have participated as a judge on the Awards Committee twice (at the Portland and Flagstaff meetings), and I will be supporting awards for our upcoming 2020 meeting in San Marcos as Awards Committee Chair.

As APCG Vice President, I plan to build on the foundations of our most recent Presidents, and focus on increased visibility of geography throughout the APCG region. I would build on the outreach campaigns already in progress, particularly to K-12 schools and non/alt-ac professionals. As a geographer for 20 years this year (!), I am still amazed at the number of “geographers in hiding”: people who do geography, but don’t have the name to attach to it, or geographers who are working across a wide variety of academic disciplines and professional positions that aren’t called “geography” or “geographer.”

I also want to continue the work of targeting underrepresented departments in our region, particularly the students at these departments. APCG is an amazing opportunity for them to plug into an amazing network of researchers in a way not fully possible during the whirlwind of AAG. In addition, and something I plan to work on NOW as Awards Chair, is to build on previous work to help increase the awards we can fund each year as a continuing avenue to target underrepresented departments. This is not just money – though while we have a robust number of awards, this is a case where more is always better – but also doing the very best we can to ensure we have applicants for all our awards each year. I tell my students frequently that they are what the future of geography looks like, and our awards system is one of the fastest ways to make that future a reality

today, while continuing to do the slower, harder work of creating a more pluralistic geography at all levels and institutions.

And much of this work would not be possible without working with the other AAG regions and AAG. Brian Pompeii, David Kaplan at AAG, and particularly Mike Pretes have done an amazing job plugging APCG into the ongoing discussions between the organizations, and I would be remiss to have those connections fall apart during my time as VP.

Finally, I want to thank all of you for welcoming me into the APCG family 4 years ago, when I first began attending meetings! I worked with the Florida Society of Geographers as a member, presenter, and Managing Editor of *The Florida Geographer* as a graduate student at USF. I also took students to East/West Lakes during my one year teaching at Wright State. What made them special was that they were smaller than AAG, which meant more community – and more discussions and interactions between geographers of every stripe and calling. I also found them to be very supportive of both students and faculty. It only made sense for me, 4 years ago, to bring students to APCG in Portland. I see this as paying forward the experiences I had had as a student – while giving my students an opportunity to interact with a broader array of geographers and present their work in a more community-oriented space. Whether elected VP or not, I plan to continue to support our APCG community as best that I can for the foreseeable future, as it has supported my students and me.

#### **Fernando Bosco, Candidate for Vice President**

Professor and Chair, Department of Geography, San Diego State University

PhD, Geography, The Ohio State University

MA, Geography, The Ohio State University

BA, Geography, Wittenberg University

I am very grateful for the nomination to run for APCG vice-president. The APCG is a very special organization that continues to do a lot for our discipline and for our students, who are given new opportunities through different grants and awards. I was introduced to the APCG when I joined San Diego State University by the late Larry Ford, who encouraged me to become active right away. I followed his advice and through the years I have remained involved. I was one of the organizers of the 2009 APCG meeting in San Diego and, for several years now, I have served in the Latina/o American Travel Scholarship committee. I am also involved with the national AAG in different ways. Recent activities on behalf of the AAG have included a couple of AAG Leadership Webinars (2021), serving as Nystrom Award Committee member (2020) and serving as a member of the Enhancing Diversity Committee member (2016-2018).

I am a critical human geographer who works at the intersections of urban, social, and political geography and I have several research interests. My work in Argentina has focused on the geographic dimensions of human rights activism and the politics of memory, with specific attention to the places, scales, networks, and emotions of collective action. During the past several years, I have been conducting collaborative research on urban food environments in San Diego, CA, with projects such as young people's food practices and journeys in so-called "food deserts", impacts of ethnic stores on food access, and connections between urban agriculture, farmers' markets, and restaurants and processes of displacement and gentrification in the city. I am also interested in the geographies of children and young people, and I have done work on children, urban nature, and participatory planning as well as on young people's activism. My work often involves qualitative methods, including fieldwork and participatory methodologies. I have authored or co-authored over 50 refereed journal articles and book chapters. My publications appear in such journals as the *Annals of the American Association of Geographers*, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *Social and Cultural Geography*, *Environment and Planning A*, *Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie*, *Antipode*, *Gender, Place and Culture*, and *Children's Geographies*. I have co-edited three books: *Placing Latin America* (Rowman and Littlefield, 4 editions, last one in

2020), *Food and Place: A Critical Exploration* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018) and *Young People, Border Spaces and Revolutionary Imaginations* (Routledge, 2011).

My research is deeply connected to my teaching, and I often emphasize the importance of community-based geographic research and critically engaged scholarship. I teach both undergraduate and graduate courses, including introductory courses on human geography, urban geography, regional courses on Latin America, and graduate courses and seminars on networks and relational thinking in human geography, place and the politics of memory, and gentrification, authenticity and consumption in the city.

Like previous candidates to APCG vice-president have said in the past, my hope is to continue to build on the legacy and work of our excellent leadership to make sure the APCG remains as vibrant as ever. This is ever so important after more than two years of so much disruption resulting from the global Covid-19 pandemic. I hope to contribute to enhancing our sense of community so our students and a new generation of geographers can enjoy the APCG meetings and networking opportunities as much as I have. If possible, I would like to explore ways in which we can extend some of the activities of APCG throughout the year through scholarly presentations, professional development opportunities for our students, and other activities that can take place as webinars or other on-line formats. If there is one upside to the pandemic is that we all became much better and creative at interacting with one another through virtual gatherings, in turn increasing access for many who would have otherwise not been able to participate. This is something that the AAG has been doing very successfully, and since we have so much talent in our membership pool, I believe it is worth exploring.

#### **Terence Young, Candidate for Secretary**

Professor Emeritus of Geography, Department of Geography & Anthropology, Cal Poly Pomona  
PhD, UCLA

Terry Young is professor emeritus of geography at Cal Poly Pomona, where he began teaching in 2002. He previously taught at Clemson University, Cal State Long Beach, USC, and elsewhere. He earned his B.A. (anthropology) at UC, Berkeley, and his M.A. (biogeography) and Ph.D. (cultural-historical geography) from UCLA in 1987 and 1991, respectively. He has published articles in a variety of journals, including *Geographical Review*, *Journal of Historical Geography*, *Planning Perspectives*, *Die Gartenkunst*, and *Mondes du Tourisme*. He is the author of two books, 2004's *Building San Francisco's Park, 1850-1930* (Johns Hopkins University Press) and 2017's *Heading Out: A History of American Camping* (Cornell University Press). The latter book won the J.B. Jackson Prize from the AAG and the Hal K. Rothman Prize from the Western History Association. He has taught a wide range of undergraduate and graduate courses, including the usual introductory ones and such specialized offerings as Biogeography, Environmental Geography, Cultural and Historical Landscapes, Protected Areas in a Regenerative World, Tourism in a Globalizing World, and Utopianism in American Urban Planning. In addition to serving on the typical assortment of department, college, and university committees, he is a past member of the editorial boards of *Historical Geography* and *Environmental History*, the steering committee of the California Studies Association, the AAG's Publications Committee, and several local arrangements committees for professional meetings. He currently serves as Vice Chair of the AAG's Protected Areas Specialty Group and as a member of the George Wright Society's Publications Committee.

Terry gave his first APCG presentation at the 2002 meeting in San Bernardino and has been actively attending and supporting our region's activities since. Now that he is emeritus, he has more time to give back to the APCG through this position. He asks for your support.

#### **Dydia DeLyser, Candidate for AAG Regional Councilor**

Associate Professor, Department of Geography & the Environment, California State University, Fullerton  
PhD, Geography, Syracuse University

MA, Geography, Syracuse University  
BA, Geography, UCLA

I seek the position of Regional Councilor to support the APCG region, to represent and advocate for the APCG on AAG Council, and to be involved as APCG representative in AAG activities at a time when I believe I can catalyze some of their activities for the benefit of the Region and the membership at large. Below I outline my service to the APCG, my service to the AAG, and my goals for my term if elected.

Though I am a native Californian and have enjoyed APCG conferences since the 1990s, I was able to become a faculty member in the APCG region only comparatively recently, gaining a position at CSU Fullerton in 2014. I'm a strong advocate of fieldwork in geography, and am pleased to be able to serve on the APCG's Larry Ford Scholarship Committee.

At the national level, I have been involved in AAG activities for some two decades. I served (2018-2020) on the Harassment-Free AAG Task Force which created a new Code of Conduct for the Association and all of its members, and introduced both an Advocate and an Ombudsperson to our annual meetings. I have served as Chair and Member of the AAG's Archives and Association History Committee. I have served on four Program Committees for annual meetings. And I have served as Co-Chair and Board Member of the Qualitative Research Specialty Group.

Most importantly for this position, since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have served collaboratively with others to create and grow something new: a series of free online workshops in research methods sponsored and coordinated by the AAG. It is this program I now seek to advocate for on Council and collaboratively move forward.

Recall that in Spring of 2020, as we all went into lockdown, the AAG sent out a call for members of five "Rapid-Response Committees" with a pledge to invest over \$900,000 on proposals the committees put forward. I volunteered for the Subcommittee on Students, and there collaboratively drafted a proposal to create what has come to be known as the "Learning Series for Graduate Students." Since then I have served on the Selection Committees for three different cycles of proposals and workshops, and have also instructed in three workshops myself. I currently serve on the Selection Committee on Research Practices and Research Design for the upcoming Summer Series.

In our first year, the Learning Series reached 573 AAG members from 30 countries—that's over 20% of the graduate-student membership!—with online materials, workshops, and seminars to help students adapt their research in the pandemic. Based on this success, the AAG Council voted to increase the program's budget, enabling a significant expansion of offerings in the 2021-2022 cycle. You can find out more about the expansive planned offerings for this summer here: <https://aag-gradresearch-series.secure-platform.com/a/page/2022summerseries> . And, if you're interested in joining us, sign up for notifications about registration here: <https://geographers.wufoo.com/forms/m1fiy0650jdx11/> .

In the Learning Series' first year Regional Councilor Lindsay Naylor (University of Delaware) championed and stewarded the program. Her term has now concluded, and, if elected by the APCG, I will seek to forward this work and help grow the Learning Series into a sustainable model for graduate education that the AAG can continue to support.

I'm happy to offer more information or to answer questions, and can be reached at CSU Fullerton at [dydia@fullerton.edu](mailto:dydia@fullerton.edu). I joined the faculty there as an Assistant Professor in 2014, and promoted to Associate Professor in 2018. Prior to that I spent 16 years at Louisiana State University (as Instructor, and then as Assistant and Associate Professor). I earned my MA and PhD from Syracuse University (in 1996 and 1998, respectively).

But it was here in the APCG region that I was inspired to become a geographer, earning my BA in Geography at UCLA in 1992.

I'm eager to communicate information from our region to colleagues at the national level, to bring AAG discussions back to our region, and to serve the whole geographical community. I thank the nominating committee, and the members of the APCG, for considering me as a candidate for this important office.

**Lorne Platt, Candidate for AAG Regional Councilor**

Geography Lecturer, CSU Los Angeles & Cal Poly Pomona  
PhD, Geography, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee  
MA, City/Urban, Community and Regional Planning, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo  
BA, Sociology, University of California, Santa Cruz

Lorne is a geographer with interests in a range of topics - including built environment quality, urban planning/history and landscape design. His most recent research focuses on sustainable transportation with a focus on micro-mobility (i.e., skateboards and scooters). He is currently a Lecturer at Cal Poly Pomona and Cal State Los Angeles.

**Michael Pretes, Candidate for AAG Regional Councilor**

Professor of Geography, University of North Alabama  
PhD, Geographical Sciences, Australian National University  
MA, Political Science, Northwestern University  
BA, Political Science, University of California, Berkeley

I am honored to be nominated for the position of APCG Regional Councilor! I first joined the APCG in 2003 when I taught at University of Hawai'i—Hilo, and have regularly attended APCG meetings, also serving on various committees and then as APCG Vice President (2018-2019) and President (2019-2021). My teaching and research focus on tourism, national parks, economic development, geopolitics, and historical geography, much of it about the APCG region. I hold a Ph.D. in Geographical Sciences from the Australian National University, where I studied under Professor Katherine Gibson (J.K. Gibson-Graham). I am a fourth-generation Californian (and a fourth-generation San Franciscan) with a family history in California and Hawai'i, my Spanish-speaking paternal great-grandparents having immigrated to those places at the turn of the twentieth century as migrant farm laborers. I'm the first in my family to speak English as a mother language and the first to attend and graduate from college, meaning that I have a special interest in reaching out to students with similar backgrounds and working with them to be successful in college.

As Regional Councilor, I would focus on building bridges between APCG and AAG while fiercely maintaining APCG's position as an independent geographical society. I have worked at universities in five of the nine AAG regions and have served on an AAG Presidential Task Force on the Future of the Regions, so I am familiar with AAG operations and resources, and how these can benefit APCG. I would also work to get more R1 research universities involved in APCG and to provide more resources for students and new faculty, especially at community colleges and teaching-focused institutions. I would also work to get more AAG members living in our region to join APCG and be a part of what we do.