

Association of American Geographers annual meeting
AAG 2012 New York
Polanyian Economic Geographies
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Organizers: Jamie Peck (UBC), Martin Hess (Manchester) and Sally Randles (Manchester Institute of Innovation Research)

Paper and panel sessions at Karl Polanyi has been an enigmatic presence in economic geography for at least two decades now, although in some respects he has remained an elusive figure. First came the embeddedness moment, when Polanyi's work was read mostly through the new economic sociology, and ultimately through the networks paradigm. Later came the neoliberal moment, reflecting Polanyi's talismanic role as a prescient critic of free-market globalization, privatization, and commodification. All along, he has been an inspirational figure, though rarely in a singular sense, for institutional political economists, political ecologists, and others of various heterodox persuasions. This said, sustained engagements not only with Polanyi's legacy but with the still-to-be-realized potential of Polanyian approaches have been few and far between in economic geography. Maybe this is understandable, since while many are drawn to Polanyi's writings by the seductiveness of metaphors like embeddedness, by their polemic force, or by the encyclopedic reach of his more-than-capitalist analyses, those seeking methodological templates or unequivocal theoretical injunctions are likely to have been frustrated.

On the other hand, the scope to read (and work with) Polanyi in a range of ways can also be seen as a creative opportunity, and maybe one that is complementary with a number of theoretical and methodological currents in contemporary human (and economic) geography. With this in mind, we seek paper proposals that engage and work with aspects of the Polanyian legacy. Contributions with a theoretical or methodological component are especially welcome, but so too are substantive (perhaps we should say substantivist) empirical applications, case studies, or concrete interrogations, framed in Polanyian terms or engaging with Polanyian problematics.

A provocative and far-reaching conversation is anticipated. Rest assured, though, a Polanyian turn will not be announced.

Panelists confirmed at this stage include: Erica Schoenberger (Johns Hopkins), Gillian Hart (Berkeley), Scott Prudham (Toronto), and Jamie Peck (UBC).