

## **CAG Award for Scholarly Distinction in Geography Dr Trevor Barnes**

Trained first as an economist at University College London, Trevor Barnes brought an economist's analytical eye to his innovative dissertation at the University of Minnesota on Sraffa's unconventional economics and its implications for location theory. That work was extended in the far-reaching engagement with economic theory in *The Capitalist Space Economy: Geographical Analysis after Ricardo, Marx and Straffa*, written in 1990 with his dissertation supervisor, Eric Sheppard. This book was accompanied by several tightly-argued papers on foundational issues in the spatial economy around rent, trade and the assumption of rational behaviour.

Dr. Barnes moved to the University of British Columbia immediately upon completion of his doctorate in 1983. Influenced by the rich tradition of economic history and economic geography in Canada, his work has developed in two highly fruitful directions. First, in conjunction with Professors Roger Hayter and Meric Gertler, Dr. Barnes has grappled with some of the central dimensions of the Canadian space economy, including Innis' work on staples and heartland-hinterland relations. Two co-edited volumes, *Troubles in the Rainforest: British Columbia's Forest Economy in Transition* (1997, with Hayter), was the culmination of a number of co-authored papers on the forest sector, and was followed by *The New Industrial Geography: Regions, Regulation and Institutions* (1999, with Gertler), both books the outcomes of successful Canadian conferences addressing these themes. Second, his presuppositional analysis has led in a radically new direction in interrogating key categories of economic geography and identifying them as pervasively influenced by social and institutional relations. In his visionary volume, *Logics of Dislocation: Models, Metaphors and Meanings of Economic Space* (1996), institutional and textual analysis is extended to economic geography itself. This move was anticipated in his earlier collaboration with James Duncan in their edited volume, *Writing Worlds* (1992), and the later *Reading Human Geography* (1997, co-edited with Derek Gregory). Here he addressed the social construction of texts, including the contingency of models and metaphors as rhetorical strategies, as forms influenced by both aesthetic and political considerations, and not at all the transparent vehicles they are supposed to be in a conventional philosophy of science. In this corpus of work, Trevor Barnes has moved beyond economic geography and is contributing to the broader project of human geography.

Currently, both of these research streams are active and fruitful. Indicative of his own institutionalization of economic geography is the massive volume, *A Companion to Economic Geography* (2000, co-edited with Sheppard). At the same time in a highly original manner, he is developing arguments from science studies in a re-interpretation of the quantitative revolution in human geography, using archival methods and ethnographic interviews. A spate of papers from this research programme has recently appeared.

From functional analysis to hermeneutics is no small move, and displays the unusual intellectual dexterity of a highly skilled researcher. Less than 20 years from his PhD, Trevor Barnes has completed seven books, more than 50 articles in refereed journals, and 20 essays in edited volumes. But more than numbers, the quality of his contributions, meticulous, wide-ranging and written increasingly with wit as well as insight, identify him as among the most skilled practitioners of his generation in Canadian geography. Not to be forgotten either is that he has twice been recognised as undergraduate teacher of the year in the UBC Geography Department, among a growing list of other awards and honours. He has been a generous and able contributor to his university and to the discipline, including a period of more than a decade as a member of the editorial advisory board of *The Canadian Geographer*.

Trevor Barnes is an innovative and prolific scholar, a master teacher, and an effective servant of the discipline. He has perfected his craft, and as such is a distinguished candidate for the 2002 Award for Scholarly Distinction from the Canadian Association of Geographers.